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THE

MISCELLANEOUS

WORKS AND NOVELS

OF

R. C. DALLAS, ESQ.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. VII.

CONTAINING

THE SECOND VOLUME OF MORLAND.

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MORLAND:

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

THE SIMPLE.

Ex noto fictum carmen sequar. HOR.
My scenes, though feign'd, from real life I draw.

VOL. II.

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MORLAND.

CHAPTER XXI.

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The next day made me acquainted with more of the family, for Miss Broke had returned the evening before with her mother, and both she and the young squire were constantly running about the house like two young greyhounds at play. There was a striking resemblance between the brother and sister both in face and manner; they were neither handsome nor ugly, but the vivacity of youth would have turned the scale in favour of the former, had it not been counterbalanced by folly; they both of them laughed whenever they spoke, and at whatever they did not understand; he was rude and boisterous, she forward and a hoyden; he loved to make fun, and she to enjoy it; he was nearly as feeble in his person as in his intellect, she was stout, passionate, and cunning.

Murphy having been punctual to the appointment I made for him, I went to Lady Broke with the mask, and obtained her permission to carry him to the music-room. She gave me the music of the mask copied fairly, with her own words to the airs, and told me that she would be with us in a few minutes. I accordingly conducted my musician with our instruments, the lute and violin, to the room, where I opened a very fine-toned piano, but, alas! it was miserably out of tune. Fortunately, Murphy, who taught the piano, could tune it, and I returned to Lady Broke to delay her coming till he had done it. While I was with her Ladyship she informed me that Sir Nicholas was at times extremely nervous, and desired that I would take no notice of what had happened the evening before. She then told me that he had passed a bad night, and had risen early to take a long ride, which was always of service to him. From this she went to the subject of the mask, was in raptures on my reciting a great portion of my part, and when I said I hoped to obtain her approbation, when the piano was ready, in the songs that fell to me, I thought she would have forgotten herself, and embraced me. She rung the bell, and desired Flora, who attended, to send Miss Broke to the music-room, whither she was going herself, adding that she should also want Daphne, Iris, and Mercury.

There was no occasion to send for Miss Broke: no sooner had the sounds of the piano reached the ears of the brother and sister, than they ran to see who was at it, and we found them perplexing Murphy with their noise and tricks. His repeated, "pray Sir, pray Miss," were of little avail, and Lady Broke was under the necessity of interfering to keep them quiet till the instrument was in tune. Her Ladyship then desired me to take the seat at

the piano: the tone of it was very fine, and I had great pleasure in playing an extempore prelude. This brought in the damsels, and Murphy, having tuned his violin, accompanied me by his ear as I sang one of Apollo's songs to the old tune of Gramachree. If I had had any musical vanity, I might have piqued myself on Lady Broke's ecstasy, the attention of her son and daughter, and the ejaculated, "Dear!" of her nymphs; but I never considered music as a fit subject of ambition; I esteemed it solely as a means of pleasure, whether I performed or listened, and I hope I shall not be thought most vain in saying for myself that my heart was little contaminated with vanity of any kind. I was early actuated by the intrinsic value of things, and always separated it from the false glare reflected by self. If, however, there was no vanity excited by the praises of Lady Broke, I confess they infused another selfish feeling into my mind, and the high-street of Oxford edged the gentle curve of the instrument before me. Indulging this selfish feeling, I opened the book at the beginning, and went through every ditty and madrigal to the end, calling upon the damsels to sing what was allotted to them, which being airs they had warbled from their cradles, they executed without any difficulty. Murphy played extempore accompaniments throughout, with great taste; and in singing I took care to express the words very distinctly. I really believe it was one of the happiest mornings in the life of Lady Broke, who regretted again and again that Mr. Dalby was not present.

One of my principal objects being to establish Murphy at Broke-hall as a teacher, I took the liberty of requesting that Miss Broke might play to him. As the young lady was not burdened with *mauvaise honte*, the request was easily obtained.

The girl was not devoid of talent, but it had not been properly cultivated. Murphy threw in instructions modestly enough, and so well timed as to produce their effect. The result was that he was engaged to attend her three times a week, at five shillings a lesson, and his horse-hire. The ensuing Monday was appointed for the first lesson, and he was desired to keep himself disengaged on Tuesday also, that he might assist at the rehearsal. I was highly delighted with my success in serving this young man, and could scarcely have felt more pleasure at a presentation to a benefice for myself. After taking some refreshment he left the Hall, his tongue overflowing with the language of gratitude for the services I had rendered him, and I devoted the rest of the day to making myself a finished Apollo, Lady Broke having enjoined me to be ready for the rehearsal on Tuesday.

The day succeeding that on which my interest had been so increased by the piano-forte, produced an unexpected occurrence that gave it a rise still more rapid, in the very channel to which my views were directed. It was Sunday. The family were punctual in their attendance at church, for, whatever was the degree of faith respectively placed by the heads of it in the articles of religion, both Sir Nicholas and his lady were fully impressed with the utility of example in the support of due subordination among the lower classes of society. As the church was several miles distant, it was necessary to use carriages for those who went to it: there were always two, and often three. Informed of the custom, I this day took a seat with my companions of the second table, in an open vehicle in which there was a range of benches for the accommodation of a greater number of persons than is afforded by a coach. We followed the Baronet's coach and six, in

which the father, mother, son, and daughter were seated. Just as they passed the porter's lodge, one of the hind springs snapped, and the corner of the body fell with a violent jerk, on the perch; the sudden motion and the inclining position of the carriage frightened the good people within. Lady Broke screamed for help, Sir Nicholas roared to be let out. In an instant there were upwards of a dozen persons about the door, and the family were extricated without any injury. As soon as young Broke and his sister were out of danger, they began to laugh, and to enjoy the accident as a piece of fun; but it was some time before Sir Nicholas and Lady Broke recovered from the agitation into which they had been thrown; and all thoughts of proceeding to church being abandoned, the whole cavalcade returned to the house on foot.

On entering, her Ladyship, who had been proposing it to the Baronet, asked me if I would undertake to read the service, and a sermon to the family. I readily assented. All the domestics were summoned to the parlour: on a table, conveniently placed, were laid the large family-bible and prayer-book, and Flora brought me a small, elegantly bound duodecimo of sermons, telling me that her Lady had marked the one she wished me to read. Some old velvet cushions that had been in the castle for several generations were placed near another table for Sir Nicholas, his Lady, and the young Brokes. On the opposite side of the room, a little lower down, her Ladyship's nymphs, and Mr. Radley were stationed, and at the bottom the servants assembled. Had I been able to consider this little congregation as an assemblage of beings cheerfully devout, who had resolved not to let an accident prevent their uniting in grateful praises of the Supreme Being, I should have shared the genuine enthusiasm; but when I

saw in an outward act of worship the means of adding security to worldly exaltation, when I considered it as a mere wheel in the machine of temporal affairs, may I not forgive myself if, in this one instance, I too lost sight of the proper object of the meeting, and prayed and preached with a zeal inspired by self-interest? The service was a combination of various idolatry. The heads of the house bowed the knee to pride and rank, the dependants to good places, and the lecturer, alas! to a will o' the wisp. I had got nearly half through the service, when the young squire, for whom I had waited till his mother desired me to begin, opened the door and came in. His entrance caused a bustle among the servants in making way for him: he had a grin upon his countenance, and I saw him thrust his tongue into his cheek as he looked at one of the grooms. I was upon the point of being disconcerted, but was relieved by observing that the general fixed attention I had excited was not interrupted by the squire, who walked up to his sister, by whom he sat down, repeating to her the elegant grimace with which he had honoured the groom. Miss Broke's giggle, restrained from being audible by a bite of her lips, showed itself in the inflation of her cheeks and the motion of her shoulders. I began to be afraid that I should not stand this double battery; but feeling that I had a great deal at stake, I summoned all my resolution, and proceeded, supported by the evident progress I was making in the mind of their mother. When it was proper to kneel, the young squire, as if ashamed of the attitude, continued sitting, his elbow on the table, and his chin supported by his hand doubled, over which his lips appeared drawn sometimes in between his teeth, and sometimes pushed forward, the upper one strained close to his nostrils: but his mother's looks repaid me for his

grimaces. As for Sir Nicholas, he never once took his eyes off me: sitting, kneeling, or standing, he seemed not to have the power of removing them; but they turned up unnaturally from beneath his brow, for the rest of his countenance drooped, and he had, as Thomas expressed himself, a down look, in spite of their raised direction. Lady Broke occasionally whispered him a few words, which he returned with a nod, and I properly placed both to the account of my own idol.

When I opened the duodecimo delivered to me by Flora, I found it to be a volume of Sterne's sermons, and was not a little surprised, considering the festival in preparation, to find my text to be; *It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting.* My surprise, however, ended with the three first words of the sermon, which are, *That I deny.* I then saw that the quaintness, not to say irreverence of this abrupt opening, suited her Ladyship's taste, and had recommended it to her choice on this occasion. In my opinion, however, nothing that succeeded in the sermon could atone for this false and ill-placed humour, which brought to my mind a remark upon Sterne I had somewhere read, that, whatever were his merits, he always seemed ready to throw his wig at you from the pulpit. Be this as it may, I gave his sermon all the energy I could, and, though no advocate for action in the pulpit, I yielded in this instance to the taste of my patroness, and threw in so much emotion and gesture that I more than once blushed for myself before the sermon was ended. However, the effect proposed was attained; for when I attended Lady Broke in her boudoir, about an hour after, she gave me her opinion upon the frigid and the animated manner of delivering discourses, assured me that I *had given* Yorick in a better style than any clergyman she had

ever heard, and concluded with saying that it was a great pity I had been obliged to quit the walk which I had originally taken—" but," added she, sinking her voice, and speaking, as if to herself, " that may yet be " remedied." Had the sentence been unequivocally addressed to me, and spoken through a trumpet, I could not have heard it better, or collected a surer presage. It gave an active impulse to my imagination, which was no longer bounded to preparatory studies, but took its flight the full length of the Vicar of Holcomb's prediction.

Anxious to lose no ground, I went to my room and employed myself in getting Apollo by heart till dinner-time, when I joined my table associates, and was more regaled by their flattering reports than by the delicate repast of which I partook. From the butler I learned that Sir Nicholas himself had joined in my praise, in spite of his being more hipped than he had seen him for a long while. " He has " been speaking to me a good deal about you," continued Radley, " and has commissioned me to " enquire of you very particularly respecting your " parents, what situation they are in, and how you " come to have such a good education." I assured Radley that I had nothing to add to what I had already related to Lady Broke; that I was ready to repeat it to Sir Nicholas, and to answer all his questions whenever he thought proper to honour me with his commands. " He has company dining " with him," said the butler, " but I make no doubt " he will have some conversation with you soon." We all then talked of the preparations for the birthday, and of the rehearsal appointed for Tuesday. The damsels were anxious lest I should not be ready in my part, as I had had so short a time to study it; and they were astonished to hear that I was then ready for a rehearsal. After dinner the butler's

heart was open, and he said that he had a treat for us, putting on the table a bottle of wine of a fine deep red colour. " This, Mr. Edward," said he, " is a " favourite stuff of ours, but it is too rare for us to in- " dulge in often ; help the ladies and yourself, and give " me your opinion of it." The ladies with one voice declared it was excellent stuff. Having tasted it, I said I thought it delicious, but at the same time confessed that I had never met with any before. " No " wonder," said the butler, " there's not much of it " in England, nay, I may say, in Europe, or France " itself. This, Sir, is the genuine hermitage: isn't " it of an exquisite flavour? Come, fill again, you " will judge better on a second glass." All the glasses were again filled, and being of a capacious size, left but little of the precious stuff in the bottle. The butler proceeded descanting on the delicacy and *elegance* of the wine, and had just put his hand on the bottle to fill a third time, when a footman in livery, after tapping at the door, came in, bowed, and said that Sir Nicholas had sent him for a couple of bottles of hermitage. " Hermitage !" cried the butler. " Why, man, Sir Nicholas forgets I told " him there was no more in the cellar a month ago. " I can't give him what I haven't got," continued he, winking his eye at us ; " go, and tell him he has " had the last bottle of the old batch, and that the " lot he bought at Plymouth is not come in yet." The man bowed and withdrew; the butler filled his glass and went on: " if gentlemen will neglect to " provide in time, they can't complain if they go " without the article. I always make it a rule to " give sufficient notice. Indeed, of most other " liquors we have generally fresh stores put in long " before it comes to their turn; but for this and a " few more articles we are sometimes obliged to wait " an opportunity to get the real stuff. Come, the

" bottle's with you." Taking the decanter in my hand, I began to measure the quantity with my eyes, that I might divide it. " O !" cried he, " there " is not above a glass." I said I thought there was. " Buz !" bawled the butler, " and the ladies shall " have the first of the next bottle." Smack went the fresh cork as I filled my bumper. " One isn't " a taste," said the god of the cellar, " and as we " don't drink it often, we never stop at less than " two. I have half-a-dozen more in reserve—come, " Miss M'Carthy, allow me—Miss Anderson, your " glass—Mr. Edward, help Miss Fudge." We finished the bottle, and Mr. Radley would have brought a third, but the ladies protesting against it, we rose and retired to our different apartments and occupations. I was fully resolved to betray the butler's confidence, yet, on reflection, I became sensible that it was necessary for me to act with great caution, for Lady Broke's favourite nymphs were his accomplices, and in exposing them, I might in the end be myself the victim: now, to risk a pulpit in order to save Sir Nicholas a few bottles of wine required deliberation, and prudence demanded of principle time to proceed with safety.

Engrossed by Lady Broke and Apollo, I had, fortunately for my spirits, little time to pine over the event that had accelerated my settlement at Broke-hall; yet Affington and the Joneses now and then stole into my thoughts, and arrested my progress in subservience to folly for a few minutes, till recollection impelled me on. They occupied my mind the greater part of Sunday night, and as I thought it probable that Jones would write again to me, I requested Murphy the next day, after he had given Miss Broke her lesson, to enquire both at Affington and the Exeter post-office for letters for me.

It was while Miss Broke was at the piano, accompanied by her new master, that I first had the honour of seeing Lady Broke's clever friend, the ingenious Mr. Dalby. He entered gently, on tip-toe, unannounced, making a sign with his hand to Lady Broke not to interrupt the music. I had heard only of his talents, not a word of his person, though certainly there was much more to boast of in the latter than in the former, had it not been abused by affectation and self-conceit. He had good features, a good complexion, and his hair waved handsomely round his forehead; he was above the middle size and well-proportioned; yet these advantages were impaired by the consequential air, and decided tone that accompanied them. "Bravissima! Divine!" exclaimed he at the conclusion of the strain: then addressing Lady Broke by the initial letter of her name, as was his custom among his friends; "My "dear Lady B.," cried he, "Miss B. excels herself "to-day. That's a charming piece, Sir," said he, turning to Murphy, "and you play extremely well, "indeed, except that you now and then drowned "Miss B.'s charming passages with your instrument; "pray avoid that, and I assure you you play very "well indeed." Murphy, who knew what passages of Miss Broke's playing to drown, and what to leave distinct, and who only refrained from stopping her speed to direct her fingers because he had seen the gentleman's ecstasy, bowed and smiled. Lady Broke seized the pause to tell Mr. Dalby of the advanced state of the preparations, to mention me as his substitute in Apollo, and to make me go through some of the airs. "Very pretty, extremely pretty," were the expletives with which the poet honoured me; though all the time I heard Lady Broke talking to him of me. After the songs she desired me to repeat some of the part I had studied. I could not

but comply. "Vastly well indeed!" said the poet; —"a little instruction would make you perfect. "I'll be here early to-morrow, and give you some "hints previous to the rehearsal. Do not speak so "rapidly; and make more use of your left leg." I was confounded, blushed, and trembled for the result of this profound critic's judgment on my patroness's opinion, when, to my utter astonishment, I was relieved by a *bon mot* of Miss Broke's, supported by her mother. During the poet's criticism, she kept her eyes fixed upon me in a flattering manner, and no sooner heard the counsel given for a greater use of the left leg than she cried out, "dear "me! who ever heard of a left-legged player be-"fore?" Lady Broke laughed, and I had the satisfaction of seeing my critic confounded and blush in his turn. "Nay, Miss B., nay, my dear Lady "B., you can't suppose I am so left-witted as to— "ha! ha! ha!" The ladies joined with him in laughing at this new play upon the word, and the poet having produced all the effect he intended, never finished his sentence; but as soon as the laugh was over, said abruptly: "I have the sweetest little "Italian sonnet to show you I ever read. Harry "Harrison, who, you know, is much among foreign "cognoscenti, sent it me in a letter which I received "yesterday." Lady Broke was eager to see it, and her friend gratified her immediately. As it proved of some use to me, I shall insert it here:

Spesso Amor sotto la forma
D' Amista ride, e s'asconde:
Poi si mischia, e si confonde
Con lo sdegno, e col rancor.
In pietade ei si trasforma,
Par trastullo, e par dispetto:
Ma nel suo diverso aspetto
Sempr' egli è l' istesso Amor.

Lady Broke was highly delighted with it, having had occasion to ask the English of only three words. Neither Miss Broke's opinion nor mine was taken upon it; she, it was known, had never learned Italian, and I was not suspected of it. Her Ladyship expressed a great desire that Mr. Dalby would immediately turn it into English verse: "you have "such an elegant pen, Dalby, and so ready." The flattered bard said, that if I would give him pen and ink he would do it immediately. "You will oblige "me much," cried Lady Broke, "and as I am "wanted just now at the theatre, I will leave you "with your muse." I accordingly went out to get the materials, and was followed by Murphy, who promised to bring my letters the next day, if there were any for me at Affington or Exeter. When I returned to the music-room Lady and Miss Broke left it, and I was about to follow their example, having deposited the pen, ink, and paper, but the poet deigned to call me back. "Mr. Edward," said he, "pray stay. Your Lady and I had a few "words about you while you were out of the room. "You stand well with her, I assure you, and I shall be "glad to be of any service to you in the part you have "undertaken. At present I must sketch these lines "for Lady B., but you may stay, for I shall pen "them in a minute, and as her Ladyship is engaged "I will leave them with you to present to her." I asked his permission to look at the sonnet. "Do "you understand Italian?" cried he, with a look of surprise. I replied I did, a little. "Hah!" exclaimed he, "I am glad of it, as you will be able to "judge of the translation I have made." The past tense of the verb was one of those tributes which Falsehood often unexpectedly pays to Truth, but it was unobserved by the speaker, who, while he put into my hands the copy of the original he had shown

to Lady Broke, said that he had another, from which he could translate. This he took from his pocket, and, after two or three pressures of the forehead with his left hand, wrote off the translation from beginning to end without once stopping. "*Stans pede in uno*," cried he, "for though I sat I could have stood on "one foot twice as long." He then read to me the following lines with ridiculous emphasis:

Often Love under the shape
Of Friendship laughs and hides:
Then like a ranc'rous little ape,
Into spite and anger glides.

He sometimes takes the form of Pity,
Now he's artful, now he's witty;
In all his forms, or gay or stupid,
Love is always pretty Cupid.

He said he would be obliged to me to copy them fair for Lady B., for men of genius wrote execrable hands, and I might keep his for my trouble. He made some farther observations upon the rapid flow of versification possessed by some pens; and while he talked I contrived to creep between him and the paper he had left on the table, from which, by flattering the rapidity of his muse, I diverted his attention so completely, that he quitted the house without removing the proof of its sluggishness.

The paper he forgot contained the foul copy, with its innumerable dashes, corrections, and variations, and under it the fair transcript from which the velocity of his pen intended to reap a triumph for the rapidity of his muse. I had it now in my power to revenge myself for his insolent attempt at instructing me before my patroness, and to do it completely I resolved to deliver to her a version of my own instead of his, without claiming them, and to see how he would act when he found himself in this predica-

ment. I accordingly avoided seeing Lady Broke till I had retired to my chamber and strung the following couplets:

Under Friendship's calmer form,
Oft Love creeps to weave his wile:
Then unseen he plies his charm,
Veiling wings and wanton smile.

As in strength the charm advances,
See the urchin bolder grow;
Playing frowns and jealous fancies,
Ah! too late we see the foe!

Now in Pity's form he works,
See him sport or anger move
In what form soe'er he lurks,
Love in all his shapes is Love.

Fly him raging, weeping fly,
Nor his toying trust to prove:
Now a frown and now a sigh,
Love in all his shapes is Love.

These lines I put into an envelope, and got Flora to carry them to Lady Broke, to whom I begged her to represent me as so engrossed with Apollo as to wish not to be taken from him that evening. This succeeded, I was left to myself, and I went to bed enjoying the dilemma into which the poet had been plunged by his vanity.

Tuesday was a busy day, yet little occurred worthy of being recorded. I was a good deal disappointed that Murphy brought me no letter, but I was soon called from regret by the assembling of the company. I was honoured with attention, and some unconnected spouting was volunteered by several of her Ladyship's friends, while the party waited for Mr. Dalby to proceed to the theatre, where the rehearsal was to take place. At length he came to re-

ceive his new sprig of laurel from Lady Broke surrounded by her friends, having purposely allowed them time to be collected before he made his appearance. He already felt it on his brow, he advanced gaily and with confidence, and was met with smiles by her Ladyship, who introduced the sonnet to her friends, with a preface on the rapidity of the translation. As she read the Italian, Dalby's face was illumined with joy and certain expectation. He looked round the company with a conscious smile that anticipated applause, and when Lady Broke finished the original, exclaimed in rapture, "how "beautiful!"—"Beautiful!" was echoed by some of the circle. "Very;" said her Ladyship, "but I "think it surpassed by the translation: you will all "say so."—"Oh! my dear Lady B.!" cried the happy bard, smiling, bowing his head from side to side, and pressing his white handkerchief to his bosom. No sooner, however, did her Ladyship pronounce the first line than the smile forsook his cheek, his underlip became fixed and drawn to one side, while his eyes slowly moved round to catch mine. I own I enjoyed his confusion. I saw he was at a loss how to act. He continued looking at me, his features retaining their rigid position till at the end of the second stanza, a general exclamation of "charming!" forced from him an involuntary smile and bow, such as in his situation he may be imagined to have exhibited; immediately after which he resumed his stare at me. At the third stanza his unhappy ears were assailed with, "beautiful, "very beautiful!" Exclamations, undoubtedly intended more for the poet than the poetry, and which it was clear to me he would have received as his due with more ease had he not been conscious that to one being present the truth was known: he therefore attempted to ascertain whether my secrecy

might be gained; he winked at me, smiled graciously, and put his finger on his lips as Lady Broke concluded, when, relieved by my returning his smile, he received the "*admirable!*" that was echoed round, and the successive compliments of his friends with the utmost effrontery, till Lady Broke, to complete the climax of flattery, declared that it was not only the most rapid but the most successful effusion of his muse; on which he bit his lip, drew up his nose as if he had snuffed vinegar, and cocking one eye, turned the other aslant on me to see whether I concurred in her Ladyship's suffrage. I made him easy by seeming not to have attended to the observation, and he said in a low voice, "I am extremely ho-"noured by the partial opinion of a lady of such ex-"quisite taste."

The company now proceeded to the theatre; in the way to which Mr. Dalby found an opportunity to take me aside, and he began with a serious face to complain of the trick I had played him. "I am "sorry you think you have reason to complain, "Sir," said I, "I hoped from your adoption of the "lines that you were pleased."—"Why, to be "sure," replied he, smoothing his countenance, "the lines are good lines; but then a— come, let "us understand each other; we have both talents, "and have both a point to gain. I see you are a "gentleman; let us be friends and serve each other; "what say you?" I said I should be glad to be of any service to him. "Well, then," replied he, "tell me your object, and I'll tell you mine." I said my only object was to acquire friends who might save me from sinking into a state beneath the education I had received. "A very proper and ho-"nourable object," cried he, "and be assured you "shall have all the weight of my influence with "Lady B., only take care you do not lessen that

" weight. Your lines, without a compliment, are " beautiful; so beautiful that I have no objection to " let them pass as mine. Those that I wrote in a " hurry," continued he, forgetting, or not knowing, that his laboured paper was in my possession, " are " by no means equal to them; and no wonder, you " know, when you saw yourself how they were " dashed off. So let things stand as they are, and " when Miss B. is mine, for *her* hand is *my* object, " you may depend upon something, and that hand- " some, being done for you. We will talk more by " and by, at present we are both wanted to give " poignancy to her Ladyship's taste." Saying which he skipped forward to join the party. " Alas!" cried I, as I walked slowly after him, " thou art " doomed, Morland, to be involved in base con- " fidences; these dilemmas are trials of thy virtue; " thou knowest the right and the wrong, thou art to " chuse between them. The Baronet's butler steals " his wine, and his wife's poet is going to steal his " daughter. Thy silence may be of advantage to " thy views; but how wilt thou live with the demi- " god that inhabits thy breast? What will become of " the sacred impression with which thou settest out " on the journey of life, and which has hitherto " supported thy spirits?" I concluded my short soliloquy with determining to leave my views to the Disposer of events, and to seek a proper occasion to impeach the butler and the poet.

Arrived at the theatre, I entered into the spirit and bustle of the scene. Some musical instruments had been carried up on the occasion, and Murphy with several other musicians placed themselves in the orchestra. The scenery was read from the manuscript and imagined, the dialogue was repeated with action, and the airs and chorusses were regularly sung and accompanied. When I came to the

song which Apollo sings to Daphne, I ventured, without apprizing Lady Broke of my intention, to try the effect of one of my own melodies which I had purposely adapted to the words. I had no other accompaniment than my lute, with which I had previously prepared myself. My essay was successful: the approbation of her Ladyship and of her friends was bestowed in the most flattering manner, and after being encored, I was desired to introduce the air accompanied in the same manner on the representation of the mask. Never was man so puffed as I was on this occasion by the poet, whose rapture even exceeded her Ladyship's: not only in my song, but almost in every step I took he actively pointed out something to applaud, contriving, however, to make these praises rebound upon the elegant imagination of the dear Lady B., whose exquisite composition had thrown such soul into Apollo. Sir Nicholas and Mr. Broke were both present at the rehearsal. An immoveable gloom hung upon the Baronet's countenance, and whenever I looked at him I caught his eyes fixed on me. The young squire was full of fun, and was with difficulty restrained from throwing the whole party into confusion. I observed that Miss Broke was less giddy than usual, and that she vied with her father in riveting her eyes on me, while the poet courted a look in vain. Upon the whole the rehearsal promised well—all were perfect in their parts, and the characters tolerably well cast, not excepting Lady Broke's, for she performed with spirit, and although Raphael would not have chosen her for a study of the Cyprian dame, two to one but Rubens would. I magining that Dalby would seek a private conference with me, when the piece was over, I determined to avoid him, and left the company as soon as I could, nor did I mix with them any more during the day.

From this time I was treated with great consideration and even respect by every part of the family, the young squire excepted, who, though not uncivil, occasionally attempted to play off some of his fun upon me. Fortunately his efforts all miscarried, except in one instance. One evening, a snake killed in the fields by a servant was brought up to the house; looking at it among the others, I involuntarily expressed a kind of antipathy at the sight of it. Young Broke was present and observed it, on which he told me that in the beginning of the summer a nest of them was found in the old part of the mansion. I did not perceive his drift, but at night going to bed, having put out my candle, I no sooner stretched my legs down than my feet came in contact with something cold coiled up between the sheets, which bringing the snake to my mind I forgot myself and, jumping out of bed, called loudly for a light. This was soon brought by the squire's man, who emulated his master's humour. The squire was at his heels, and entering my chamber almost together, they found me standing in my shirt, which was great fun, and gave birth to a peal of laughter. I now fathomed the jest, but kept my temper, and coolly turning down the bed-clothes, took out some links of the intestines of a hog filled with air, which, as my prudence did not suffer me to throw into the master's face, my justice prevented me from bestowing on the man. I only lighted my candle, said it was very funny, and calmly requesting the servant to carry his guts with him, bade them good night without changing my countenance. The youth, however, would not lose his laugh, the chamber echoed with his ha! ha! and the exploit served for a great part of the next day's entertainment. My mortification was not great, and even if it had been, I should have found ample amends in

the regard of his mother, if not in the significant simpering of his sister, who daily increased in officious attentions towards me till I suspected that I might, if I chose, rival the poet.

Dalby continued to hold his influence over Lady Broke in consequence of one of those unaccountable voluntary resignations to deception which some ladies prefer to a breach with a flatterer; for in the very exordium of my essay to discover to her Ladyship the views of her poet on the person of her daughter, she stopped my tongue by saying, that she should consider that person as her enemy who could be so barbarous as to undeceive her in any pleasing illusion. This made me more cautious in betraying either poet or butler, and as no opportunity presented itself, I deemed it a work of supererogation to contrive one. Time slipped away; I seldom saw Sir Nicholas, I avoided privacy with Mr. Dalby, to whom I entirely relinquished the credit of my sonnet, and I was assiduous in maintaining the favour of Lady Broke.

CHAPTER XXII.

Extraordinary communication to Morland—He hears from Jones—A metamorphosis—Festive preparations—A moonlight reverie—Unexpected and serious adventures.

Every day that brought us nearer to the long contemplated festival, seemed to increase the kindness of my patroness towards me. If I pleased her in reading to her, in hearing her read I charmed her. The little air I had substituted in Apollo delighted her, and had it not been for the time it would have

required to impress new melodies on the ear of the amateur-performers she would have had me set all the songs of the mask to new music. She now generally called me Morland, and my opinions had as much weight with her as her favourite Dalby's, if not more.

One morning in the end of the week previous to that which had the honour of numbering among its days the grand anniversary, Lady Broke, after some talk with me on the subject nearest her heart, looking at me with an unusual degree of concern, said; "I "am sorry, Morland, to think that I must lose you." An intimation of this kind, so sudden, so unexpected, alarmed me. "Good heavens! madam," cried I, "you surprise me." "Very true," replied she; "you are to leave me; but do not be unhappy, for it "will be to your advantage." Reassured by this information, I said that it belonged to her Ladyship to dispose of me as she pleased. "I could have "wished," continued she, "to have retained you "at Broke-hall at least a year or two, but it is not to "be. You must know, that being perfectly satisfied "that your manners and knowledge entitle you to "the consideration of a gentleman, I yesterday pro- "posed to Sir Nicholas that you should have a place "at our table, and I did not conceive that he would "have raised the smallest objection to the proposal, "as it came from me: it was therefore with the ut- "most astonishment I heard him exclaim, *Lord for- "bid!* I had before declared to him your preten- "sions, and even obtained a promise from him to "think of some preferment for you. He put me in "mind of this, saying that he was willing to perform "the promise, provided you were immediately sent "from Broke-hall. What a strange idea! I cannot "account for it, nor would he; and it is the first "time of his life that he has been so positive with

" me."—" I am sorry, madam," said I, " to have " created any disgust in Sir Nicholas, and should be " still more sorry to be the occasion of any diminu- " tion of the deference he pays your Ladyship."— " I am sure of it," cried she, " and that the idea is " as strange to you as to me. He can have but one " motive, and that must be very obvious; his very " concealment of it tells plainly what it is; you see, " Morland, it is in vain to be innocent." This extraordinary and indelicate suggestion brought the blood into my face. I averted my eyes from Lady Broke's, and knew not where to rest them. " Why " do you blush, Morland?" continued she, " you " have done nothing to blush for: he that suspects " ought to blush; but he did not, and his obstinacy " had nearly caused a breach. On your account, " however, I commanded myself, and I have agreed " to your leaving me after next week, on his assur- " ing me that he would enable you to go and take " orders at Oxford. So you see I must lose you, " not only to allay the jealousy of a husband and " avoid the scandal of the world, but to prevent your " losing those advantages you so highly deserve. " When you have taken orders and received some pre- " ferment I shall consider you as my friend, and then " let him keep you from Broke-hall if he can." Her Ladyship's speech and manner together perplexed me very much, but I did not fail to express my sense of the obligation she conferred upon me; and, though I could hardly ascribe the Baronet's strange conduct to the motive she had selected, I was too much interested in the effect to care much about the cause.

On leaving Lady Broke I went immediately to my room, where I contemplated my prospects with pleasure. I saw myself not only snatched from the dreaded fall to which the curate of Reading's de-

spair had doomed me, but raised to views far superior to any that my good friend Mrs. Waller could have realized for me. Had it not been for the vicar of Holcomb's rage I might have come strait to Broke-hall, and I should have had no wish ungratified to mar the present joy; but no joy could equal that which had resulted from the friendship of Jones, and the thought of being torn from him soon mingling with the thoughts of Oxford, abated my enjoyment and embittered prosperity. I was in this state of divided feelings when Thomas knocked at my door, and coming in told me that Dr. Rundle's boy wanted to speak to me. "Rundle's boy!" exclaimed I, anticipating tidings of the Affington family, "run, Thomas, "and bring him to me." While he was gone, I sometimes flattered myself that the boy might be a bearer of a letter from Jones, sometimes I feared that he brought me afflictive intelligence from Mr. Rundle himself, and at last I took it into my head that *Amy* had appeared, and that he had sent to me knowing what interest I had taken in the fate of *William*. These conjectures were soon resolved by the entrance of the lad, who said he was desired by his master to see me and deliver a letter into my own hands with his compliments. The superscription of the letter was apparently written by a female pen. I was not so eager to open it as I should have been had it been Jones's hand, I therefore made some enquiries for Mr. Rundle, and desired Thomas to see both the boy and his horse taken care of, before I satisfied my curiosity. I had, however, no sooner dismissed them than I broke the seal, and never shall I forget my feelings on reading at the bottom of the first page the name of Jones. This short letter, written by the same hand that wrote the address, was as follows:

" My dear Morland,

" A severe fit of sickness has prevented my " writing to you sooner, nor am I now able to use " the pen myself, though pronounced by the doctors " to be out of danger. I cannot rest, however, till " I inform you that you have again a friend in my " father, that my mother, who with my sister came " up to London to nurse me, has convinced him that " you are incapable of base compliances or clandes- " tine intrigues, and that as soon as I am able to " travel we shall all set out for Affington. I long " for the time, having much to say to you: mean- " while, let me hear from you soon after you receive " this, and tell me why you did not write to me " on finding my letters at Collins's cottage. I am " afraid you are at Broke-hall, and I shall therefore " enclose this to Mr. Rundle, with a request to " have it delivered into your own hands. I am, my " dear Morland,

" Your affectionate friend,

" JOHN JONES, Jun."

Let those who have been suddenly raised from the gulf of despair to the summit of hope judge of the rapture produced in my breast by this letter. I flew to detain Mr. Rundle's boy to carry my answer to the post, and immediately returned to pour out my heart to my friend. I painted to him my affliction on being abandoned by Mr. Jones; I acknowledged the receipt of his letters, and the resolution I had formed of foregoing the enjoyment of his friendship rather than be the means of creating the slightest division in his family; I complained of the secret enemy who had injured me with his father; and I dwelt on the rapture his letter excited, and on my gratitude to his mother. I concluded with a history of

my life at Broke-hall, described the inhabitants and proceedings with a *gaieté de cœur* inspired by my happy feelings, and, sketching my prospects from the microscopic vision of youthful fancy, I besought him to accelerate his convalescence by every means, and I avoided mentioning the name of Sophia. Having dispatched the boy with my answer, I again read Jones's letter, where I found a new source of delight in tracing the hand of his sister, which I now remembered to have noticed in her songs, during my happy week at Affington-house. The recollection renewed some ideas which I had magnanimously driven from my mind, and which I now again almost immediately banished, folding up the letter, and putting it away. Truth, however, compels me to confess, that I first kissed every line of it.

When I had again and again contemplated my happiness, and anticipated my preferment through Lady Broke, and my reunion with Jones, I recollected that it was one of Murphy's days, and I was surprised on reflection that he had never informed me of the departure of Mrs. and Miss Jones from Affington. I resolved to enquire the reason of it, and going into the music-room found him teaching Miss Broke. I was astonished at the alteration of his dress and figure. He had on a new dark green frock, cut off ridiculously beyond the fashion; a smart striped waistcoat, from the upper part of which through the facings of an under waistcoat sprouted an amazing frill closely plaited; his neck was enveloped in a fine blue silk handkerchief instead of a neckcloth; he had pantaloons, the legs of which were early lost in a pair of capital hussar boots relieved by long spurs. His hair, which had been pinched and powdered, was disordered by his ride, and by its natural abhorrence to the distortion produced by hot iron: but altogether he was, to use a homely simile, as smart as a

carrot. When I recollected the emaciated, cropped, humble creature, trudging a-foot in dusty shoes and a ragged coat with a fiddle-case under his arm, and compared it with the dashing gentleman before me, I could not help smiling, and, Miss Broke casting her eye on me, and then on him, and tittering, I saw he was extremely nettled. He hardly deigned to look at me, but as his scholar did oftener than he liked, he had the assurance to tell me, with a haughty look, that I took off her attention. The lesson over, and the pupil withdrawn; "why, Murphy," cried I, "you have undergone a complete metamor-" phosis." Murphy did not understand the word. "Mauphisis! Sir," said he, "I don't know what "you mean."—"I mean your dress," replied I. "Yes," said he, "I am dressed in the fashion; "the houses I go to make it necessary for me to be "properly dressed; I have a great many scholars, "and as their mammas take particular notice of me, "I am bound as a gentleman not to disgrace their "company."—"And so you are much noticed, and "are getting on well, ey!"—"Yes, I have a great "number of scholars, thank God, and can afford my-"self good clothes without consulting any body."—"Bravo, Mr. Murphy! but I had no fear of your suc-"ceeding by your talents, I am only afraid of"—"Oh, don't be afraid, my good fellow, there's no fear "of my doing—I only want a more larger sphere—"merit is not rewarded in the country. Next win-"ter you shall see what I will do. I know I shall "get letters from the Joneses." "The Joneses!" said I, frowning at his familiar tone. "They are "good people," added he, "and I have made other "friends who say I ought to be in London, and who "can promote my interest there."—"Oho! I give "you joy of your advancement; but as you have "mentioned the Affington family, let me ask you

" why you did not inform me of the ladies having " left the country."—" It did not occur."—" Pray " did you ask at the cottage for letters for me?"—" It did not occur before they went, and I have not " been at Affington since."—" But did you not " promise me to enquire?"—" I am so engaged with " people of consequence and fortune that it did not " occur."—" Excellent!" cried I, " see what it is " to have friends!"—" A man of talents," replied he, " particularly in the science of harmony, is al- " ways sure to be courted. The great are more de- " pendent upon us than we upon the great—You " don't know the world, my good fellow."—" Very " likely not; but this is certain, that I do not know " *you* again, Mr. Murphy. What have you here?" said I, taking up a book that lay upon a sheet of music paper which he had untied to put up a song with it. " Only my little Ovid."—" Ovid!" exclaimed I, opening it, and finding it to be a translation of the Art of Love, bound up with several loose poems. " Yes," said he, " it was recommended to me by " your friend Jones." Though I was not easily provoked, and had determined to consider this perverted fool more as an object of pity than of anger, I could not restrain my indignation at this slander of my friend. " 'Tis false, you puppy," cried I, " he " has too much virtue to recommend it to any one, " and too much dignity to speak either for or against " it to his fidler." Murphy looked more astonished at my censure of the book than affronted at the language in which I conveyed it. He had no idea that he had cast a slur upon Jones, but rather meant his unfounded assertion as a transient testimony of his liberality, never conceiving that I should either be offended with it, or remember it beyond the moment. With all the self-conceit that had been rapidly engendered by his uncommon success, he was

not bold enough to persist in a charge which he had some confused notion from what I had said was of an infamous nature, and confessing that he had not spoken in earnest, said he had bought it at a stall during the fair. I thought it best, in the present state of affairs at Broke-hall, to appear satisfied with this. He begged me not to mention his having taken such a liberty with Mr. Jones's name, hoped I was not offended with any thing that he had said, and assured me that he should be glad to be of service to me when he had made a fortune, which he should soon do in London. Lady and Miss Broke coming in prevented my laughing, and instead of putting Murphy's book back upon his paper, I slipped it into my pocket, resolved to consign it to the flames. Her Ladyship regaled herself with a repetition of some of the songs in the mask, till Murphy's engagements at Exeter compelled him to go. She then put him in mind that the grand rehearsal, with all the scenery and the whole band, was to be on Tuesday, previous to the representation on Thursday, the great day. As he put up his paper, he reminded me of his book; but I shook my head to intimate the impropriety of producing it before the ladies, and he did not dare to urge it.

From this time Broke-hall was in a continual state of bustle and active preparation. The scenery of the theatre was brought up and arranged; the lamps for the garden were fixed to the trees; marquees and awnings were disposed in various parts of the grounds; new ornaments were added to the great saloon; and the whole mansion, the ancient as well as the modern part, was under the changeful hand of taste. Scourers and cleaners of both sexes, workmen of every description, the family domestics, and Mr. Dalby's graces, going to and fro; the young squire and his sister running in and out of every

chamber, not excepting mine; arrivals of intimates and their attendants, who were to be accommodated in the house; and the succession of carts and beasts of burden returning with their various loads for the feast, perpetuated a moving scene, which, though heterogeneous and irregular, was not displeasing, upon the same principle that the clashing and discordant notes of many instruments in tuning for a concert are never offensive to the ear, however delicate. It was far from being unsuitable to the state of mind I was in; the happy occurrences that had relieved my anxieties left my senses free to admit an impression of pleasure, which is naturally made by an extensive combination of enjoyment. Nay, I confess that in the species of intoxication that prevailed, I more than once detected myself highly pleased with the conspicuous figure I made in these preparations. I was presented to all Lady Broke's friends, and repeatedly found myself the source of their pleasure; and, if I was not vain, I cannot deny that I was gratified. In submitting, however, to her Ladyship's taylor stuffing me into the gaudy garments of the god of day to try how they fitted, I felt myself for a moment Tom Fool; but I was reconciled to the cap and trimmings, not only in consequence of the general praise they obtained, but in gratitude to Apollo for the part he had had in my preferment. Lady Broke could not sufficiently admire them, and as for the queen of the feast, she could hardly restrain her raptures within the bounds of decency; such are the great effects of a little tinsel.

In the beginning of the week the arrival in Exeter of several families expected from a distance was announced at Broke-hall, and an interchange of morning visits took place. Mr. Dalby, who, satisfied with my secrecy, did not observe that I intentionally avoided him, was now a busy personage, and Mur-

phy, turned gentleman and coxcomb, was also a prominent character. This young man's folly vexed me not a little, and I determined to give him a lecture upon it as soon as the festivities of Brokehall were over, as the part I had taken in his advancement entitled me to advise him. He had again applied for his book, and provoked me to tell him he should never have it, which enraged him to that degree that he swore he would.

On Tuesday every thing began to assume the appearance of arrangement, and the number and gaiety of the company then in the house would, without farther addition, have formed, in my opinion, a grand celebration; what magnificence then did I not look forward to on Thursday, when every part of the mansion would be filled with persons of the highest rank and fortune, with fashion, wit, and beauty. The company, however, seemed as much interested with the prelude, as they possibly could be with the feast itself. All were in high spirits but Sir Nicholas, whose short attempts at merriment were constantly succeeded by long and gloomy reveries. In the evening the gardens were lighted for a short time to judge of the effect of the lamps, and the theatre was as completely adjusted for the rehearsal as it was to be for the representation. The musicians placed themselves, the spectators took their seats, the scene-shifters were at their posts, and the *dramatis personæ* were all dressed in character, the Arcadians were all ready with their crooks and their garlands, and nothing was omitted. The poet, who had relinquished his part in the mask in consequence of the defection of *the Daphne*, made amends by speaking a prologue composed by himself in a style worthy of his translation, and in which, as a birth-day tribute, he bestowed on the Lady a

fine face and graceful mein, a cultivated understanding and every virtue of the heart: Venus gave her her beauty, Minerva her sense, and Diana her chastity, which united boons he, by a new figure of speech, concentred in the donation of an all-accomplished mother. He was rewarded with applause not inferior to his expectation, for it is a rule in gratuitous performances to overlook faults, and never to disappoint hope. The piece, meagre and puerile as it was, was played with spirit, and gave general delight. The music, the show, the action, and above all, the diffusive tendency of pleasure gave a relish to the entertainment perhaps never surpassed at any public theatre.

The remainder of the evening was spent in eating and drinking, in flattery and mirth: of the last young Nick created a great deal, while his father sought a resource in the bottle. The company took their refreshment in groups, standing or sitting as they inclined; Dalby's prologue was handed about with his adopted version of the Italian sonnet, and he lavished his smiles, gracious looks, and familiar expressions on me with greater profusion than ever. I received such attention from every one that I should not have been sorry for the positive commands laid upon me by Lady Broke not to leave the saloon, had it not been for one circumstance by which I was again and again put to the blush. Wherever I turned, with whomever I spoke, I was sure to catch the eyes of Miss Broke upon me, and when mine met her's she smiled and gazed so oddly that I was disconcerted. Several times I was in such a position that I could not move without pressing against some person, in which situation she would needlessly fix herself as close to me as if we were in a crowd, and tread on my feet: I more than once begged her

pardon; and at last her conduct became so irksome that I resolved to quit the room, and accordingly retired unobserved.

The action both of mind and body in which I was engaged the whole evening, the praises I had received, the conversations I had been honoured with, the delicacies I had eat, and the wine I had drunk, all concurred to indispose me to sleep, and, instead of retiring to my room, I walked into the garden, strolling to an alcove that fronted the west. The air was mild and unagitated, the sky serene, the moon, nearly full, was high in the firmament; the repose of nature seemed doubly tranquil to my senses, so long bent on the moving scenes of gaiety. I sat down to enjoy the silence, freshness, and beauty of the night. I insensibly fell into a reverie, in which my imagination, after passing over the immediate occurrences of the evening, recalled the passed events of my life, reviewed the melancholy story of the injured Sophia Nevill, dwelled on my friendship with Jones, and reperused with infinite delight the letter that had restored him to me; it then sprang forward into futurity, it put me into orders and gave me a benefice, it united me with Jones, it housed me at Affington—shall I own it? shall I confess the intoxication? it raised my thoughts to the lovely Louisa—in the glowing state of my feelings I dared to think it possible she might receive the incense of my heart. Entranced in the delightful vision, I yielded myself to the fairy faculty till the chill of the midnight hour awakened my senses, and sent me into the house.

It was near one o'clock, the family and the guests had been gone to bed above an hour, Thomas, who with one or two of the strangers' servants was lingering in the kitchen, brought me a light, and I proceeded to my chamber. I had just begun to undress myself, when I thought I heard somebody run gently

along the passage to my door, on which I went up to it with a candle in my hand to see who was there, but before I could take hold of the lock it was opened, and young Broke entered. I was rather surprised, but immediately imagined he was upon some of his fun. "What a d—d fool you must be," cried he, with an arch grin, "to keep the candle alight." Saying which he blew it out. "Now you have a "chance," continued he, "but you had none before, "and I shall come in for some of the fun. You are "betrayed by Murphy; he is at this moment bring-"ing Sir Nicholas by the light of the moon through "the passage; hark!"—"I am not easily terrified, "Mr. Broke," said I, "and I beg you will leave my "room." "Hush!" cried he. I now heard steps very plainly. The moon being on the other side of the house and my windows being partly shut, the chamber was sufficiently darkened to prevent the distinguishing of persons, but not to conceal objects entirely. Young Broke having groped his way to my bedside, and drawn the curtain close, said, in a low voice, "I say, an't you afraid?" at that moment the door burst open. "He has put out his "candle," cried a man, whom by his voice I knew to be Sir Nicholas—"shut the door—call for lights." As he roared this out a pistol went off; the flash discovered it to be in the hand of the wretched man, it was directed towards the bed—his son fell, uttering a dreadful groan. A terrible silence ensued. Convinced that I was the object of his fury, and almost stupified with horror, I feared to speak or move, lest a second pistol should be as fatal to me as the first had been to the foolish youth, who had in a manner sought his own death. I was astonished that the murderer, instead of avoiding detection, stood guarding the door, while his accomplice was gone for lights. Trusting that the bearer of the lights would prevent

any farther mischief, I remained as still as possible, praying to the Almighty to divert the attention of the villain from me. The dead silence that reigned in the room was interrupted only twice, and then by the same involuntary and unaccountable exclamation from the mouth of the assassin: "I am safe again, I "am safe." The report of the pistol alarmed several of the guests, who, directed by the sound, were hastening in their bedgowns to enquire what had happened: they joined the servants, and as the party approached with the light, the pistols became visible to me in the hands of the murderer. I was standing at a little distance from him, my waistcoat open, my knees unbuttoned. I trembled lest his eyes should turn upon me. Impelled by terror, as the door opened to admit the crowd that had collected, I rushed upon Sir Nicholas, seized his hands, and directed the pistols upwards. Far from opposing me, the affrighted wretch gazed as if at a spectre, let go the weapons, and sunk upon the floor. Appalled by the terrible circumstances that overwhelmed my faculties, and scarcely sensible that I held the pistols in my hands, I looked wild, and was speechless. The body of young Broke, bathed in his blood was examined, and found lifeless. To the general question; "who has done this?" I had not sufficient recollection to reply, till I heard Murphy, who had returned with the candles, exclaim; "how could you commit "so desperate an action?" "*He!*" cried Thomas, who was among the spectators, "Mr. Morland kill "the young squire?"—"Who else could do it?" cried Murphy. "What reason have you for saying "so?" said a gentleman, "and what motive had he "to murder Mr. Broke?"—"To prevent his finding "his sister, to be sure," replied Murphy. "Infamous "villain!" cried I, recovering myself from stupor to plunge into madness—"infamous villain!" and I

presented the pistol in my hand at him; but I instantly withdrew my arm. The action, however, alarmed the bystanders, and some of them declaring that I was mad, seized me by the arms. The efforts made by some of the people to recover Sir Nicholas were gradually successful, and he recovered sense enough to know what was passing, without sufficient strength to interfere. Some more of the guests were coming in every moment, and Murphy having put his head through the curtains, and looked into my bed, went round from one to another, muttering to the persons immediately addressed. I was convinced he was endeavouring to criminate me, and I was about to address the company, when one of them said: "certainly, it will decide the fact at once," and going up to the bed undrew the curtains. Gracious heaven! how was I confounded on perceiving some person in it shrinking beneath the covering! "Infamous! Horrible! Seducer! Murderer!" were the petrifying words that now reached my ear, and harrowed up my soul. "Gentlemen!" cried I, "you "cannot, you cannot believe it." The bystanders raised their hands and eyes to heaven, and remained a few moments in silent consternation. None but Thomas seemed disposed to shew me the least favour, and he, poor fellow! I remember it well, and ever shall—boldly said: "let things look as they "may, for my part I am sure Mr. Morland don't de- "serve any such ill suspicion, that he don't." As he said this, Sir Nicholas groaned, and keeping his head down, desired to be helped away. Murphy went with him, and presently a man coming in said, that his master had given orders that I should be secured, and that the person in the bed should be ascertained. A couple of stout fellows laid hold of my arms, and several persons were going up to the bed, when a figure, in a wrapping gown, suddenly darted

from the farther side of the bed, and endeavoured to escape to the door. Caught by the arm, she turned to extricate herself, and the part of the gown that veiled her face falling upon her neck, exposed, alas, too clearly! the guilty countenance of the Baronet's daughter. She was then suffered to make her retreat amidst the repeated exclamations of "infamous! horrible!" As for me, I was lost in fearful amazement, and finding every attempt to justify myself unavailable, yielded to my fate. The body of young Broke was removed, the company gradually left the room, and I remained with my guards. In about half an hour two men came in, and, informing me that I was committed, said that I must go with them immediately. Reviled, forsaken, considered as a seducer and a murderer, my fortitude gave way, my soul for a moment sunk beneath its load, and not caring what became of me, I followed my gaolers without uttering a single word, and without once thinking of the nature of the place whither I was about to be conveyed. I remember not in what vehicle I was transported from Broke-hall, I interchanged not a syllable with the men who had me in custody. I was awakened from my trance by the sounds of bolts and the clanking of irons. I started at the new horrors that presented themselves, I involuntarily drew back, I grasped the gaoler's hand, pressed it warmly, and begged him to tell me what I had done. He said it was too late to talk to me, and bade me come along. I made a slight resistance, and was forcibly pushed forward. A bundle of straw was thrown into a corner for me, I sunk down upon it. The massy door was locked upon me. I was left in total darkness.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Morland in prison—Reflects on himself—The vicar's conduct —A lawyer—News from London and from Broke-hall— Important occurrences in the prison.

The horror of my situation overpowered my faculties, and it was some time before I could compose my mind sufficiently to reflect with any consistency. Happily the season of the year was favorable; my common apparel and my straw were even more than necessary for warmth and relief from the hard pavement; when, therefore, my recollection began to assume a regular train, it was not interrupted by additional bodily sufferings, and as I was conscious that I was innocent of the crime for which I was imprisoned, with recollection I recovered a great degree of fortitude. Revolving in my mind the circumstances which had led to my imprisonment, I found no great difficulty in accounting for most of them. Although it had never entered my imagination that any young woman could be so lost to modesty as to steal at midnight from her own chamber to that of a man, I was convinced from the whole of Miss Broke's conduct that she had determined to relinquish every pretension to that virtue: however surprised I was therefore at her being detected in my room, it was on reflection, no wonderful event. Her behaviour the whole day before, particularly in the evening, being but too obvious to every eye, it was nothing strange that a corrupt spirit like Murphy's should be so excited by suspicion as to put him upon the watch. There was no doubt in my mind that he had traced her into the chamber, that he had informed both Sir Nicholas and his son of her being there, and that while he was on this noble

business, I had come in from the garden and gone to my room. It was clear that young Broke had no idea of his father bringing arms, that he was unprincipled enough to laugh at his sister's degeneracy, and had hurried on to gratify his propensity to what he called fun. His father's mistake on seeing him at the bed-side was natural, and the impetuosity of passion occasioned the parricide. All this was intelligible, but Sir Nicholas's self-congratulation on *being safe again*, his terror, his immediate relinquishing of the pistols, his instant swooning before he could know what he had done, were unaccountable circumstances; and when to these I added his behaviour on first seeing me, his persevering gaze at me ever after, and his resolution rather to provide for me at once than suffer me near him, I was lost in conjecture; for as to the foolish motive Lady Broke's vanity had induced her to suggest, it was corroborated by no one symptom. If ever jealousy had been a passion of his heart it had apparently long ceased to act: and besides their having both attained the age which it seldom molests, she had long been the uncontrolled mistress of her conduct; nor had all her marked partiality to Mr. Dalby awakened one uneasy thought in her husband's breast. On these inexplicable points, therefore, I pondered for hours in vain, till exhausted nature closed the avenues of thought by sleep.

In a few hours I woke to new horrors, I found myself surrounded by a number of wretched culprits, criminal in various degrees, who were to be tried at the next general gaol-delivery. Their hideous looks, their filthy garb, their hardened manners, all conspired to shock me. Some of them accosted me, and asked for money as a custom; others inquired into the nature of my offence. It was with some difficulty I obtained a cessation of

attention. So many accounts have been given of prisons of every kind, and of the scenes exhibited in them, that a description of those which it was my lot to witness would be superfluous. I shall only observe that few of the prisoners seemed very sensible of the horrors with which they appeared to be surrounded. They discovered little remorse for the past, or apprehension for the future: they ate and drank, were easily amused, and anticipated acquittals. As for me, driven to this woful extremity, the first thought that occurred to me was to make my situation known to the vicar of Holcomb. I had fortunately several guineas in my pocket, which not only procured me sustenance but enabled me to employ a messenger. Having obtained pen, ink, and paper, I wrote a letter to Mr. Whitaker. It was but a short one, for I was eager to dispatch it, and thought nothing necessary but a statement of the crime I was charged with, a denial of it, and my confinement. I urged him to espouse my cause, and entreated him to come and hear what I had to say.

When I had given my letter to one of the turnkeys, who promised to send it without delay, being previously paid for the conveyance, I again meditated on the occurrences that had involved me in my present misery, and I examined my heart to see how far I had deserved it. The charge itself for which I suffered was out of the question; men in punishing proceed on visible and ostensible crimes, but if the heart be dyed with offences, it is of little importance that it happens to be clear of that of which error or villany accuses it. In human codes and statutes the precise penalty must be written against each offence, but this principle extends not to the law paramount of heaven; the blasphemer, the traitor, the slanderer, may be given over to the death

of the murderer, and the conscience of the wicked will justify the punishment, though the particular accusation for which he suffers be unfounded. I examined my heart—alas! it reproached me bitterly. I had sacrificed truth and honour at the shrine of pride, I had abandoned sincerity for the prospect of preferment, I sought obligations from a person I despised, from one to whom my gratitude could never be pure, as no service could prevent its being mingled with contempt and abhorrence. I reproached, I reviled myself for this defalcation of virtue, this vicious spirit; and I considered the blasting of my hopes as the just retribution of my offence. I did not, however, think that offence deserving of so heavy a punishment as the suspicion, far less the conviction, of murder; but, after repenting the folly and depravity of my conduct at Broke-hall, I fully resigned myself into the hands of the being who knew best how far to try me, and whose chastisements have their source in love.

From myself my reflections turned upon Lady Broke, whose infamous conduct towards Sophia Nevill now met its reward. She, who had been so ready to sully the fame of that lovely, injured, virtuous girl, was now to face the same circles of acquaintance from whom the infamy of her daughter could not be concealed. The re-action was complete, and her punishment the more just for her unpardonable negligence of those principles that should be early, and in preference to every other part of education, instilled into the mind of children.

I supported my spirits for some time by a train of moral reflections, which were interrupted by the turnkey, who came to tell me that my messenger was returned from Holcomb. "Has he brought me "a letter?" said I. "No."—"Is Mr. Whitaker

" coming then?"—" No."—" What can you mean?" cried I; " has he sent me no message?"—" He told " the man who carried your letter, to say that he " wondered at your assurance in sending to him."— " Is it possible?" exclaimed I: " great God! what " is to become of me?"—" That must depend upon " the defence you can set up," said the gaoler, " I " suppose you mean to employ a lawyer. You have " time enough, the 'sizes don't come on these three " weeks yet."—" Three weeks!" cried I; " am I to " remain three weeks in this condition?"—" Why, " yes," replied the turnkey, " seeing that your af- " fair an't a bailable matter." I said it would be impossible for me to exist without my things and better accommodation. " As for your things," said he, " I don't suppose you will get them, but you " had better consult a lawyer; and as for accommo- " dation, if you have money you may purchase con- " veniences." I thanked the man for his advice and information, and said I would take a little time to consider what to do. I thought of Jones, but, alas! he was at a distance, and hardly out of a bed of sickness, into which I feared he might again be thrown if I communicated to him too soon the horrid situation I was in. Mr. Rundle also occurred to my recollection, but what hope could I have of his interfering in my cause, when Mr. Whitaker had forsaken me! After some consideration I resolved to advise with a lawyer, and having no friend to recommend one to me, I requested that favour of Mr. Ward, the keeper of the prison, who immediately sent for one of his acquaintance, whose name was Brainbridge. The first question this attorney asked me was relative to the state of my finances, and being informed that I had altogether in my purse and in my trunk between twenty and thirty guineas, he said it would be enough, though barely, to carry me

on to the assizes and through my trial: but the first thing to be done was to get possession of my trunk, which might be attended with some difficulty, but he would undertake it. I then told him the circumstances relative to the death of young Broke. He said I told my story very well, and that Counsellor Langworthy, whom he should fee if he got my trunk, would make it do with a jury; but the best way would be to get a plump oath if we could. "It is "time enough, however," said he, "to talk of that "by and by, when we have secured your means. "I'll go about it directly, and see you in the after-"noon." Saying which he left me to ponder on my wretched state, for I thought it useless to apply to the keeper for better accommodation till I could convince him that I was able to purchase it.

Brainbridge returned according to his word, and brought my trunk with him. He told me that Sir Nicholas Broke was confined to his bed, but that on talking with the butler he had found less opposition than he had expected. "But," said he, "they tell "a very different story at the Hall from yours, as I "suspected. There's half a dozen evidences to the "pistols being in your hands when the lights were "brought, and I understand there's a young man "ready to swear positively that you shot the Ba-"ronet's son, at the time he was bid to go for can-"dles. However, never fear, I have got many "others off in as bad cases." He then asked me to make an advance on account, as was customary. I said I should have no objection, on knowing how he meant to proceed, and begged him to give me some notion of what was to be done. He here entered into an account of the legal process from the commitment of an offender to the execution of his sentence. "Now," added he, "you know as much as "I do myself, and the thing we have to do is to get

" you off. We can't go to prove an *alibi* as you " were seen on the spot by so many people, but " there was one man among the servants that talked " as if he meant me to understand he was to be had; " nay, he went so far as to say he was sure you " were an innocent man: now, we must give him a " weighty argument, you understand me, why he " should have got into the room before the rest, and " seen you, as you say, take the pistols from Sir " Nicholas: then if that young fellow, the musician's " evidence can be bought off, there will be nothing " to hinder your going before the jury with a bold " face, notwithstanding the Baronet's power in the " county." Having suffered the attorney to reveal all the infamous practices he purposed to employ in my favour, I calmly told him I would sooner die than consent to be saved by such means, and saying that I would leave my cause to the penetration of the judge under providence, I requested to know what I was indebted to him for the trouble he had taken. Brainbridge was inclined to be abusive, observing that he would not have done any thing, if he had not thought he was to do all the business; but I pacified him by assuring him that I should employ no other attorney: on which he said, that as for his charges he should leave it to myself to take into consideration the service he had been of in procuring my trunk, besides the journey and his trouble. In addition to these considerations I added myself a very important one; he was the keeper's friend. I gave him three guineas, and he went away satisfied, after advising me to think better of it than to trust either to human sagacity or supernatural interference. I thought otherwise, nor, oppressed as I was with the shocking events and circumstances which seemed to criminate me, did I ever apprehend that I should be convicted for them. I was shocked at

the idea of appearing as a criminal at the bar, but I felt confident that if I were brought before a court, the truth would be made manifest.

I now made my resolution known to the keeper, and convincing him that I could support myself for some weeks, he dismissed a portion of rigour from his visage, took me into a little room beyond his own, and listened to my account of the event at Broke-hall. Whether convinced by my artless relation of the fact, or softened by the golden recommendations of my purse, I know not, but he said that my case was a very hard one, and that, as far as he could go, I should not want for comfort. He had a couch placed for me in the little room, which was as strongly barricadoed as any other part of the gaol, and allowed me to eat with him and his wife, for which, though I paid extravagantly, I was very grateful. Worn out with fatigue and depression, I went early to my couch, where I slept soundly till the keeper came to call me to breakfast next morning. I was treated with civility, and even respect, by the gaoler and his wife: they procured me whatever I wanted, and I might either sit in the room I slept in, or in their parlour. The former was my choice, but I sometimes found a relaxation for my mind in the latter.

I passed the whole of the second day in deliberating whether to write to Jones or not, and was at length determined by reflecting that my situation and the charge against me would probably be immediately made known to Mr. Jones with the accumulated aggravations of report. In my letter I gave an account of all that had happened, described the previous behaviour of Sir Nicholas in respect to myself, and stated my resolution to rest my cause on the operations of truth and innocence. I conjured Jones not to suffer a wrong bias to be impressed upon his father's heart, whatever were the

event of my trial, and not to run any risk of a relapse by a precipitate journey into Devonshire. Two days after I had dispatched this letter I sat in the inner room, reading Voltaire's account of the execution of Calas for the murder of his son, and had come to the passage where, after being broken on the wheel and on the point of being thrown into the fire, he appeals so affectingly to the monk who exhorted him to confess the crime; "Father, can "you bring yourself to believe that I am guilty?" when I was interrupted by the entrance of Thomas, Lady Broke's servant. The poor fellow having been sent to town on some errands had found a letter for me at the post-office; and it induced him to venture to come and see me, which he had felt a great inclination to do ever since the day of my commitment. Much as I was pleased with the attention of this good creature, and desirous of knowing the transactions at Broke-hall, my letter, on the sight of Jones's hand, engrossed my thoughts, and thanking Thomas mechanically as I opened it, I read as follows:

"I am again able to hold the pen, my dear "Morland, and the first use I make of it is to ac- "knowledge both the pleasure and the pain your "letter from Broke-hall has given me. I am de- "lighted with your descriptions and with the spirits "you write in, but that your prospects should pro- "ceed from a creature I must always despise, such "a woman as Lady Broke, is not to my mind: I can "hardly bear the thoughts of it. But comfort "yourself; my father, who is warmly interested in "your welfare, says he is glad to hear that you are "going to Oxford under the Broke patronage, as "the Baronet has it so much in his power to serve "you; and he thinks it would be very imprudent to

" withdraw from the tide of good fortune which " seems to favour you. Well! be it so, though I " cannot help thinking you would have been hap- " pier in the less considerable kind offices my father " might have rendered you, and which he has been " planning with me for some days past in the most af- " fectionate manner. Morland, he is the best of men ; " I have much to say to you of him, but as I am " forbidden to indulge myself in writing, I will not " enter upon the subject till we meet, which I hope " will be very soon, as I am stronger, and shall be " able to travel in the end of the week, though lei- " surely. This is the day of the grand farce at " Broke-hall: I wish it was over; I cannot endure " the idea of your taking a part in it. We had " cards, and must have been present, had it not been " for this illness of mine, to which I therefore feel " great obligation. *Some* of the Nevills will be in " the crowd: you will distinguish Clara; she is very " handsome—but, Morland, she is not Sophia. You " need not answer this letter, as we shall leave town " before yours could reach me here. My mother " and sister desire to be very kindly remembered " to you. I am, very truly,

" My dear Morland,

" your affectionate friend,

" JOHN JONES, Junr."

The pleasure this letter gave me was counter- balanced by the dread of the effect that a malignant report of my misfortune might have on the mind of Mr. Jones, and I condemned myself for having de- layed so long to send my own account, which I found would not arrive in London before his depar- ture. I was however confident that Jones would give no credit to it, and I buoyed up my spirits by

uniting the thoughts of his friendship with the consciousness of my innocence.

The confusion at Broke-hall that followed the death of young Broke, and the detection of his sister, exceeds description. Sir Nicholas was carried to his bed, where he lay the whole of the next day; Lady Broke, in the rage excited by her daughter's disgrace and her own disappointment, had broken a blood vessel; a stop was put to the festival; the company in the house departed without seeing their host or hostess, and in their room came physicians, surgeons, and undertakers. An inquest was held, and on the evidence of Murphy a verdict of murder returned against me. Not satisfied with this, the miscreant, collecting groups of the attendants and servants, painted me in the vilest colours, declared I had been turned out of Affington-house, and said, among other things, that I had purloined a book of his and would not return it: when Thomas mentioned this I asked him if he had heard it himself: on being assured that he had, I immediately saw the advantage it would be to me on a trial, and I told Thomas that he must be ready to give his evi- "dence. That I will, Sir," said he, "and do any "thing in my power to serve you, in spite of Sir "Nicholas or any body else; for I am very sure you "had no pistols in your room till they were carried "there." "How are you sure?" said I. "Be- "cause," replied he, "I know Sir Nicholas's pis- "tols very well, which I saw in your hands." "Were they," said I, "produced before the coro- "ner?" "I don't know, Sir," answered Thomas, "for I was not let to go into the room." I bade him enquire, telling him that it was of the utmost importance to me to have it ascertained. He assured me he would, and repeating his conviction of

my innocence left me glowing with affection and esteem.

When he was gone I compared his spirit with Murphy's: for the one I had done little or nothing, for the other every thing; the one disregarded interest in favour of justice, the other broke through every tie of gratitude to support injustice; the one was noble in a livery, the other, in the assumed garb of a buck, was mean and vile. The livery, which I had so much dreaded, clothed one superior not only to Murphy, but to the wealthy master in whose service it was worn. Thine, O virtue! thine is the real distinction! In whatever state, beneath whatever garb thou art found, true nobility dwells. I endeavoured to find some adequate cause for the egregious depravity of Murphy's soul. From what source could such a return of evil for good spring? Could a slight correction of his vanity, could friendly advice, could the depriving him of an improper book give birth to so diabolical a spirit? No, the diabolical spirit was already in him, he was

> ——a born devil, on whose nature
> Nurture could never stick; on whom the pains,
> Humanely taken, were all lost, quite lost:
> And as, with age, his body uglier grew,
> So his mind cankered.
>
> SHAK. TEMPEST.

In thinking of this creature I lamented the depravity of his nature, while I felt him beneath resentment. I was sensible, however, that he would hesitate at nothing to accomplish my destruction, and I considered how it was possible to turn his own malignity upon himself. He had already betrayed his principles in speaking of his book, which I had fortunately put into my trunk. I trusted the same ignorant malice would lead him into toils of his own

spreading, and I hoped much from the production of the pistols.

Several days passed without any farther occurrence of moment to my history: left to myself, I endeavoured to support my mind by reflection and books. As I often sat in the keeper's room, I heard what was going on in the prison, and saw persons who came to visit the prisoners. One morning there came in two ladies plainly dressed: the first that entered appeared to be between forty and fifty, above the middle size, and of a mild and pleasing aspect; the other young, beautiful, and of the same height, whom I was certain I had seen before, but did not immediately recollect where. The elder of the two asked for the young woman of the name of Norman, who had been committed to prison the night before. "Madam," said Mrs. Ward, the keeper's wife, "the poor girl is sound asleep, and I "am almost afraid to wake her; she certainly is out "of her senses at times." The lady looked at her watch. "Let us wait, my dear mother," said the younger one, "the business we have may be done "at any time, but the situation of this poor creature "requires immediate attention." What heavenly interest did this speech cast on the lovely lips that uttered it! It was the perfume to the rosebud: the benign expression of the eye that accompanied it, gave soul to beauty.—"Pray, ladies, sit down," said Mrs. Ward, "and as I know your goodness to "the unfortunate, give me leave to tell you that I "am sure it could never be better bestowed than in "befriending this young gentleman, who has no "friends to support him." The eyes of the mother and daughter were instantly turned upon me. I blushed at Mrs. Ward's unexpected appeal in my favour. It was previously my intention to have withdrawn, and I now involuntarily rose. "Don't

" be so shy, Mr. Morland," added the good woman; on whose mention of my name the young lady immediately exclaimed in a low tone, " Morland!" surveying me with a look that seemed to scrutinize both my mind and person. " What Morland?" said her mother. " I have no family, Madam," said I, " by which to distinguish myself; I am an unfor-" tunate outcast whom it pleases Providence to put " to some severe trials."—" You surely cannot," replied she, " be the person of whom there has been " so much talk lately?"—" I know not," said I, " how much I may have been talked of; but it is " too probable, Madam, that you have heard me " spoken of as a murderer." They both shuddered at the word. " I could lay my life it is false," cried Mrs. Ward, " from what I have seen of the young " gentleman: I wish, ladies, you would make him " tell you his story, and persuade him to have a law-" yer."—" That I think," said the elder lady, " prudence would dictate."—" I do not," replied I, " feel myself so attached to life as to wish to pre-" serve it by taking advantage of legal forms. An " acquittal that does not establish innocence is not in " my opinion desirable."—" But innocence," said the younger lady, her eyes still fixed upon me, " may require assistance against a powerful adver-" sary, and for the purpose of being placed in a " proper point of view."—" No doubt, Madam," I replied; " and though I am not acquainted with the " practice of the law, I believe you will find it to be " the part of an English judge to act as counsel for " every man arraigned before him of a crime. This " assistance I am confident I shall have, and I am " satisfied with it."—" The crime with which you " are charged is of a dreadful nature," said the elder lady, " but you speak the language of inno-" cence, and certainly your looks are not those of a

" murderer; yet we know into what horrors the " passions of men sometimes betray them. Give " me good grounds to believe you innocent, and " you shall neither want money nor countenance, to " support your cause." I assured this benevolent woman, that however I might want countenance I was by no means in want of money. This led her to make some farther enquiry respecting my situation in life, and I felt inexpressible consolation in giving an account of myself, and in relating the occurrences that had terminated so gloomily.

The interest my story excited was very evident in the countenances of my hearers, the two ladies; for Mrs. Ward had withdrawn before I began my narrative. In some parts I observed their eyes turned from me to meet those of each other, and then refixed on me. In the looks of the younger I thought I discerned a peculiar intelligence and an increase of interest. When I finished my story, they both declared their belief of it, not only from the simplicity with which it was marked, but from the opinion they entertained of Sir Nicholas Broke and the whole family. Having lightly mentioned my friendship with Jones, and declared that he, his father, and the curate of Reading, were the only men in the world I knew, who were disposed to serve me; " You cannot, Sir," said the younger lady, " have " a better friend than Mr. Jones; for, though his " fortune is not to be mentioned in comparison with " Sir Nicholas Broke's, his virtues and his name " rank him among the foremost of the inhabitants " of this county."—" I know," replied I, " the es- " timation in which he is held, and perhaps, Madam, " he will be at Affington before I am called to trial. " I have a letter in my pocket from his son, who is " sufficiently recovered to travel."—" Recovered!" cried the daughter. " Has young Mr. Jones been

" ill?" said her mother. " You shall see his letter," replied I, " it is written without the knowledge " of my situation, and his style will still farther " strengthen your belief of my innocence." I read the letter to them; when the mother said that she was not acquainted with Mr. Jones, but was happy to hear such a testimony in favour of my principles: and she assured me that she would immediately relate my account to a friend of hers who was acquainted with the Affington family, and who would join with Mr. Jones in stepping forward to countenance me on the day of my trial. I expressed my gratitude in the warmest terms, and requested with great earnestness that she would allow me to know the name of one so good to me. " If you had not " asked," said she, ' I should have left you to learn " it of Mrs. Ward, who knows me: my name is " Alton." The name instantly brought to my recollection the features and person of the beautiful cottager of whom I had a transient glimpse in her garden on the bank of the Ex. I mentioned the circumstance to her, which she remembered; and I told Mrs. Alton of the liberty Jones and I had taken, in stealing a look at the sweet spot on which the Hut stood.

Mrs. Alton had not time to make any answer before the door opened, and Mrs. Ward entered leading in the young woman whom Mrs. and Miss Alton had come in quest of. There was a great deal of simplicity in her appearance; and her face, marked with grief, was pretty. She burst into tears on seeing Mrs. Alton, who encouraged her, but it was some time before she could speak: at length she said; " dear Ma'am! I don't know what ails me " lately, but I quite forget myself at times; and I see " such odd things: pray don't speak about it."— " Compose yourself, my good girl," said Mrs.

Alton; "your letter was brought to us this morning, "and we come to see if we can be of any service to "you. How come you in this part of the country? "and why did you leave Overton?"—"Oh! dear "Ma'am, it's a long story to tell," replied she, "and "I am afraid my wits won't last me through: my "name is Amy Norman, Ma'am; I live at Overton— "Oh! I beg your pardon, Ma'am, for I need not tell "you my name—you remember Amy, poor Amy "Norman. Indeed, Ma'am, I was not born at the "time when they did it, and why they have sent me "here I can't tell." At first the name of *Amy* passed my ear unnoticed, but the repetition of it brought to my mind the stranger that died at the inn, and my curiosity was awakened; for this girl might be the Amy he had spoken of. Her language, however, was so incoherent that little could be collected from it. She did not even seem to know for what she had been committed, and Mrs. Ward explained the cause. On alighting from the stage-coach, she declared to the landlady, before one of the waiters, that she was come to Exeter to discover a great murder that had been committed; and, continuing to talk mysteriously, it was thought necessary to apprehend her. Mr. Jones of Pinhoe, the magistrate celebrated in the early part of these memoirs, happening to be at the inn at the time, she was instantly taken before him, and the depositions of the landlady and the waiter, with the unintelligible answers of the girl to the questions put to her, were quite grounds enough for that worthy justice to commit her. When brought to the gaol, Mrs. Ward found her wild in her thoughts; and, conceiving that she was entirely deranged, resolved to have her guarded till morning, and then to represent her case to the mayor. However, upon taking some refreshment and resting, she became tranquil and

tolerably rational, and when questioned as to her being known in this part of the country, after saying she was a perfect stranger, recollected that a lady of the name of Alton had left Overton to come and live near Exeter; on which Mrs. Ward, to whom the character of Mrs. Alton was well known, had written the letter that had brought the ladies to the prison. "Amy!" said Mrs. Alton, "be col-"lected, and if you have any thing to communicate, "speak freely."—"Indeed, Ma'am," said Amy, "I "know nothing of it; it was done before I was born, "and it is very hard I should be put to prison, and "kept from searching for my poor William. Dear "Ma'am, if you will only prevail upon my lord the "judge to wait till I find William, we will tell all: "we come on purpose, indeed we do." I was now convinced that this young woman was the Amy Mr. Rundle had mentioned. Miss Alton turning to her mother, observed in a low voice, that there was clearly something upon the girl's mind, and that their best way would be to get her released, and take her home; where, by keeping her composed and taking care of her, she might be sufficiently restored to impart the circumstance, whatever it was, coherently. The lovely mouth from which this heavenly suggestion proceeded, being turned towards me as well as towards her mother, I expressed a desire to speak with the ladies on the subject, but alone, lest what I had to say should affect the girl; on which Mrs. Alton, telling her that she would see her released and come for her presently, requested Mrs. Ward to go with her to her room.

On their withdrawing I related the story of William's death, with which I found the ladies acquainted, and they readily embraced my persuasion that Amy Norman was William's Amy. Mrs. Alton then told me that she was the daughter of a man

who had purchased a farm at Overton, and was amassing money when she left the place; that Amy had often, while a child, been admitted to her house, and as she grew up a well behaved, good girl, she had continued to take notice of her: she had been well educated for her station in life, and though her manners were not those of polished society, her principles were even refined and delicate. Mrs. Alton concluded with saying that she was both surprised and grieved to find her in this situation, that she should take her home, put her under the care of Mr. Rundle, and write to her friends. She then resumed the subject of my own imprisonment, said she believed Sir Nicholas to be a very bad man, and asked why, as I was acquainted with Rundle, I had not applied to him. I said I had been deterred by the result of my application to the Vicar of Holcomb. "You have a very good friend in Rundle, "I assure you," said she; "but I believe that, like "ourselves, he has been puzzled by the reports of "the event at Broke-hall. I will this morning tell "him my opinion, and I am sure you will see him." As she uttered these words, the lock of the door was turned, the door held a little open, and Mrs. Ward, speaking to a person on the outside, said; "Mr. "Morland is not alone, Sir."—"Alone or not, I "must see him immediately," replied a voice that went to my heart; I ran forward, and clasped Jones in my arms. "I little thought when we parted, "Morland," cried he, "that we should meet in a —" He stopped, gazed at Miss Alton, and exclaimed: "Is it possible?"—"Yes, my dear friend," said the lovely girl, stepping towards him with her hand held out, "it is not only possible, but true." —"Dear, dear Sophia!" cried he, "what an age is it since I saw you! and to meet you in such a place as this!"—"I wish we may have cause to think it a

"happy meeting," replied she; "it will depend "upon you. Indeed I am very sorry to avoid you." —"Oh! promise me," cried he, "that you never "will again. You know not what I have suffered by "this separation." Poor fellow! his pale face and unbraced muscles testified his sufferings. "I am "truly grieved," said she, "to find you have been "ill, but I can make you no promise that is not "sanctioned by this lady: she is the friend of whom "I wrote to you; my guardian angel, my adopted "mother, who has united with my own beloved mo- "ther and father, to mark out for me a path of real "enjoyment. She knows and respects you; gain "her esteem, and you will complete my happiness." —"Make me what you please, Sophia," said Jones, "make me what you please, Madam," he repeated, turning to Mrs. Alton; "but do not banish me any "longer from your society. Condescend to be my "guardian angel also."—"My dear Sir," replied Mrs. Alton, "I am happy to see you, and by and by "I will freely communicate my sentiments to you; "but let us recollect ourselves, let us recollect the "place and the occasion of our unexpected meet- "ing. Our business makes it necessary that we "should now leave you with your friend, who I as- "sure you has extremely interested us in his be- "half."—"You will not leave me," exclaimed Jones, with a look of the greatest anxiety; "you "will not, at least, go before you tell me who you "are, and where you live."—"I cannot, if I "would," replied she, "conceal from you my name "and place of residence, for both are known, not "only to the keeper of this prison, but to your "friend; I do not, however, wish it. You know "the Hut on the Ex, and in us you see the inha- "bitants of it, Mrs. and Miss Alton."—"Sophia "Nevill, Miss Alton!" exclaimed he, "Sophia

" Nevill, Morland's cottager!"—" This rapture," said Mrs. Alton, " this forgetfulness of the melan- " choly offices that brought us hither, convinces me, " Mr. Jones, that it is not yet time for us to culti- " vate our friendship—and—" Jones consciously cast down his eyes in silence: Miss Nevill's, which I watched, were fixed upon him with an expression of grief, that was, however, mixed with a softness, in which I read a hope that resolutions formed in absence, and at moments when her soul was agitated with the most painful reflections, would be overcome by the society and perseverance of her lover; I therefore did not suffer Mrs. Alton to finish her sentence, in which I foresaw a prohibition of his visiting the Hut—" Forgive me, Madam," said I, " for interrupting you; and permit me to observe, " that Mr. Jones and I have much time before us, " whereas he has but a few minutes to ascertain the " certainty of paying his respects to you. Your " goodness to me, the countenance you have pro- " mised me in the dreadful position in which I am " soon to appear publicly, would be rendered so " grateful, so heartening to me, by the intervention " of my friend, that I trust you will allow me to owe " to this meeting a consolation which Providence " appears to have ordained for me."—" I am so " well satisfied of your innocence," replied Mrs. Alton, " that I would refuse you no consolation in " my power. Mr. Jones," continued she, addressing my friend, " in one conversation we shall tho- " roughly understand each other: we are at present " going to procure the liberation of an unfortunate " young woman who is confined here, to-morrow I " am engaged, but come the day after, and spend " an hour with me at the Hut." Saying which she rang the bell, while Jones expressed his thanks, and Mr. Ward opening the door, she and Miss Nevill

bade us good day, and left the prison. Jones riveted his eyes on Sophia as she passed, nor were hers averted from him, till the shutting of the door obstructed their sight.

As soon as she was gone, Jones pressed my hand, and begged me to forgive him for suffering his thoughts to be diverted from my misfortunes: "but, "Morland," said he, "judge of my surprise, and "of my apprehension by their absorbing my faculties at such a moment." He then told me that he had left London before he received my letter communicating the event at Broke-hall and my situation, which a servant who had been left in town had brought on to the first stage. "I cannot," said he, "express how much the intelligence shocked us all. "My father, well knowing that the effect on my "mind was more likely to cause a relapse than a little bodily fatigue, proposed himself that we should "make the journey in two days instead of four, as "was at first intended. We are but just arrived. I "begged to be set down at Rundle's as the coach "passed through the town: Rundle was not at "home, my father went on with my mother and sister to Affington, and I hastened hither. My dear "Morland, I am wretched at the dilemma into "which the villany of Sir Nicholas has thrown you. "It is very clear he seeks your life, and will, if possible, make the death of his son the means of gratifying his revenge, but I trust in God your innocence will appear: it almost speaks for itself; you "see that both Mrs. Alton and Sophia are convinced—Oh! how charmed I am to think that *she* "sought you—" I interrupted Jones, to set him right in this particular: I told him the occasion of the ladies visiting the prison, and our opinion respecting Amy Norman, with which he immediately concurred. I then related to him more at large than I had been

able to do in my letter, the occurrences at Broke-hall, prefaced with an account of myself and of my feelings from the last time I saw him, in which he sympathized with the true ardour of friendship. I concluded my narrative by expressing the pain I felt at having made a secret enemy, and the total loss I was at to trace him. "That," said Jones, "I have "done: any man who wishes to conceal himself "from me must not make a confidant of my father. "It is to Hewson we are so much obliged: but he "is not such a villain as Murphy. The fool thought "he was doing right, and therefore we must forgive "him, though his modes of acting are not those of "a liberal mind. It seems he listened to our con-"versation, and conceived it to be his duty to in-"form my father of what he had gathered from it." —"That," said I, "we may impute to a defective "judgment, but in his communication to Mr. Jones "he descended to downright falsehood."—"I did "not know," said Jones, "whether my father de-"tected the falsehood, or passed over that circum-"stance through his accustomed humanity: but "since I have been with you, I have discovered "that the stupid fellow did not mean to tell a false-"hood, in saying you had found out Sophia's re-"treat. He knew of our ramble to the Hut, of "your having previously seen the supposed Miss "Alton, and jumbling his ideas with the letter you "had found for me, he composed his very virtuous "communication. I now plainly perceive that my "father was acquainted with Sophia's plan, and "that, wishing it success, he thought it proper to "keep a knowledge of her residence from me. "When I received his letter in which he charged "me to join him without a moment's delay, I was "unhappy, because I guessed the motive to be his "apprehension of my discovering Sophia during her

" stay in Devonshire, which I did not doubt he
" knew. The vexation at not seeing you, the hurry
" of my journey, the wretched state of my heart, the
" painful reflection on the opposition of my father's
" sentiments and mine, sowed the seeds of an illness
" which the first interview I had with him confirm-
" ed. He frankly told me the intelligence he had
" received from Hewson, without concealing his
" name, renewed his former arguments, and pressed
" me in the warmest manner to conquer an attach-
" ment, of which the success must, he said, be at-
" tended with such painful consequences. I as free-
" ly acknowledged the state of my mind, informed
" him of our accidental meeting in the alcove at Af-
" fington, and of the friendship that had been the re-
" sult of it, assuring him that far from carrying on
" any clandestine correspondence, you had advised
" me to open my heart to him and to show him So-
" phia's letter. He gave full credit to all I said, and
" spoke very kindly of you. Habituated to confide
" in me, he wanted no corroboration of my truth; but
" it so happened that Hewson's conduct produced a
" confirmation of what I said respecting you. I
" wrote you a letter, which being brought back
" from your lodgings, I left at Affington to be
" sent again: Hewson, however, thought proper to
" enclose it to my father. It contained an expres-
" sion of my feelings, both as to you and Sophia, I
" took notice of your advice respecting my father,
" and assured you of my determination to follow it.
" This letter arrived a few hours after me, and my
" father gave it to me unopened, but I immediately
" broke the seal and put it into his hands. In the
" evening I sat down to write you an account of
" these circumstances, but I was too ill to proceed.
" I went to bed, a violent fever came on, I became
" delirious in the course of the night, and when I

" recovered my senses, I found my mother and sis-
" ter sitting by me. I continued ill, and was thought
" to be in great danger. My father, to relieve my
" spirits of all their burden, declared that he would
" not oppose my happiness, and that he gave me free
" permission to address Sophia. He also talked of
" you whenever the doctors allowed him to converse
" with me, and the latter part of my sickness was
" rendered delightful by his dwelling on his inten-
" tions and plans for you. The account my mother
" and sister gave of you helped to raise you in his
" opinion, and their sentiments of Sophia infused
" the balm of health into my veins. I recovered fast,
" but anxious lest you should not be able to account
" for my silence, I got Louisa to write to you for
" me. I have already told you the effect the know-
" ledge of your situation produced upon us, and I
" have only to add, that my father, thoroughly con-
" vinced of your honour, is determined to support
" you by every means in his power. He will see
" you to-morrow, and speak for himself." Jones having finished his account of the interval that had elapsed since we were separated, continued with me conversing on topics relative to my situation, and to my approaching trial, and sometimes, led by me, on subjects equally interesting in my opinion; on the inhabitants of the Hut, and on the inhabitants of Affington-house. We eat our dinner together in my little room, and he did not leave me till I compelled him, by showing my anxiety that he should be at home before the day closed.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Visits in prison—Poetical justice legally executed—An attorney employed—Evidence obtained from Thomas—Sequel of Sophia's story.

Confined in a prison, charged with murder, prosecuted by one of the most powerful men in the country, I nevertheless passed the night in the most delightful reflections, by the enchantment of which I was kept awake till long after day-light. I rose late, and my little room was scarcely put to rights before I had a visit from Mr. Rundle. He gave me his hand, and in a kind manner expressed his belief of my innocence. He informed me that Mrs. Alton had been with him the day before, but that he had not been able to see me, having, besides some professional business, been occupied in the commission she had given him, which was to counteract the effect of the reports from Broke-hall. "I shall continue my "diligence, I assure you," said he, "and I trust "that the horrid impression which has been made "will be completely removed long before your "trial." He then told me that Mrs. Alton had procured the discharge of Amy Norman, and had taken her home with her. He said that he did not think the girl's present derangement of mind was likely to be a confirmed malady, that he should attend her, and that perhaps a few days quiet, and kind treatment, would restore regularity to the train of her thoughts. "I must now leave you," said Mr. Rundle, "and you may think me unkind when "I tell you that I have forbidden your friend Jones "to quit Affington to-day. However, it is absolute-"ly necessary that he should rest, his journey has

" been too great an exertion for him." I assured him that I considered his prohibition as a proof of his goodness. " To console you, however," said he, " I have brought you a packet that will both " surprise and please you: I will not anticipate its " contents." Saying which he put the packet into my hand, and promising to see me soon again, went away.

On opening the packet I found two letters in an envelope from Jones. The letters were both directed to Robert Nevill, Esq. Ex-Mount. On Jones's envelope were the following few lines from himself. " Rundle, seconded by my mother and " sister, compels me to remain at home to-day; you " will, however, see my father. I called at Ex- " Mount after I left you yesterday, and was intrust- " ed by Mrs. Nevill with the enclosed, which I send " to you, knowing the interest you will take in " them. They are from Colonel Nevill, who is just " arrived from India. To-morrow morning I spend " my promised hour at the Hut, from which I shall " ride immediately to you. Keep up your spirits." The enclosures were as follows:

" Salisbury, Oct. 1.

" My dear Sir,

" Having long resolved that on my arrival in Eng- " land I would wash out the stain that had been cast " on our family before I joined them, I wrote a few " lines to Mr. Montague, directed to his house, de- " siring an immediate meeting, to which I had no " reply for several days. At length I received the " following answer, which I copy verbatim. ' Mr. " Montague will not disappoint Colonel Nevill, but " is under a physical impossibility of meeting him at " present. The impediment will be removed in the " course of this week, and should Colonel Nevill be

" then near Salisbury he may hear of Mr. Montague " at the Castle-Inn.' Salisbury being on my way, I " immediately went thither with a determination to " remain there till the time appointed. Guess my " surprise when I learned that he was a prisoner, and " to be tried at the Assizes for shooting a Mr. Bet- " tesworth in a duel. The judges, who are now on " the circuit, are expected in this town to-morrow, " and it is said he will be tried on Friday. I shall " wait the event of the trial, and inform you of the " particulars as soon as it is over. In the mean time " keep this letter to yourself. Your last letters re- " specting Sophia gave me infinite pleasure: I ne- " ver blamed her, as the villany of Montague spoke " for itself. I trust she has received my last, which was " written a very short time before I left Bengal. I " hope to be with you soon, but do not be uneasy at " any delay. I am confident you would rather I " should never come again to Ex-Mount, than ap- " pear there while this villain is on earth. I am,

" My dear Sir,

" Your affectionate son,

" ROB. NEVILL, jun."

Anxious to know the event, I took no time to add reflection to the surprise this letter created, but hastened through the other:

" My dear Sir,

" Enquiring who the judges on this circuit were, " I found that one of them was our old friend Bote- " ler, on whom I called yesterday afternoon. You " will have the pleasure of seeing him at Exeter in " the course of his journey. He soon knew me, and " I had a very pleasant hour's chat with him. I " went to the court this morning in his retinue, and " through the interference of the officers who at-

" tended, obtained a seat on the bench near him, so " that I distinctly heard the whole of Montague's " trial. I have not time to enter into a minute ac- " count of it. There certainly never was a more ac- " complished villain. It appeared that he had been " long betraying the confidence reposed in him by " the Bettesworth family, and that his treachery " was only discovered in consequence of Miss Bet- " tesworth's loss of health, which terminated in her " dissolution. A little before she died she wrote " him a very pathetic letter intreating to see him. " The letter opened by her father, revealed the " dreadful cause of her death. The unhappy man " gave it to his son, who instantly wrote a challenge " to Montague, then at Bath. The meeting took " place near Warminster: they fired together, and " Bettesworth fell at the first shot. Some observa- " tions of one of the seconds having led to a suspi- " cion of the meeting, measures were taken to pre- " vent it, but too late. The apprehending of Mon- " tague, however, was the consequence. The coun- " sel for the prosecution were instructed to animad- " vert on his character, which I found was already " well known to the judge. When called upon for " his defence he spoke with astonishing eloquence, " and a confidence equal to that of an experienced " counsel. He endeavoured to remove the odium " that had been excited by the account of his cha- " racter, expressed a detestation of duelling, in an " act of which, he said, he had been involved " against his will, and he excepted to the indict- " ment, which he laboured like a lawyer to prove " defective in point of form. His eloquence and in- " genuity, however, availed him little: there was no " flaw in the indictment, the fact of his shooting " young Bettesworth was fully proved, and the jury, " whose indignation he could not extinguish, found

" him guilty of murder. The address of the judge " on passing sentence of death was extremely pathe- " tic, as well as dignified and moral. I believe every " eye in the court, Montague's excepted, was filled " with tears, at the picture he drew of the misera- " ble consequences of seduction, particularly applied " to the case before him. His family, anticipating " the possibility of an unfavourable verdict, have " been making powerful interest to obtain a pardon, " should it be necessary, and the judge was request- " ed by some persons of great distinction and in- " fluence to suspend the execution of the sentence. " This application being made previous to Monta- " gue's leaving the bar, the judge called to him, and " having commanded silence, addressed him, as " nearly as I can remember, in the following words: " ' Prisoner, attend. Some gentlemen near me, " thinking that I can suspend the execution of the " law, have hinted that a pardon is expected from " our constitutional source of mercy, and have in " consequence solicited a reprieve for you. There " is a statute which ordains that a criminal convict- " ed of murder shall suffer on the next day but one " after the passing of his sentence, unless there is " good and sufficient cause for the judge to respite " the execution. Now, I think it incumbent upon " me to prevent your wasting the few awful hours of " life yet remaining for you, in the vain hopes which " you may be disposed to build on the influence of " your friends. I have already given you such ad- " monitions as I think adapted to your situation; I " only mean to enforce them by assuring you that " so far from considering your case as one that calls " for a relaxation of the law, I am of opinion, that " mercy shown to men of such habits would be the " height of cruelty to the community. I shall cer- " tainly not interfere with the progress of the law.

" Make the most of the short time before you.'
" Montague, not the least disconcerted, smiled, and
" without bowing, withdrew with the officers: on
" which the judge called the sheriff, and telling him
" in a low voice that he conceived by the prisoner's
" appearance, that he was likely to anticipate the
" execution of the law, directed him to have him
" searched, and strictly watched, and to take care
" that no means of self-destruction were left in his
" power. His maternal uncle, Lord Colney, and se-
" veral of his relations instantly set off post for the
" court, with a hope of returning in time with a par-
" don. There *is* time, as Sunday intervenes, but
" Judge Boteler is convinced that they will not suc-
" ceed. He has engaged me to dine with him to-
" morrow, and I shall stay the event of Lord Col-
" ney's application; but I assure you not with an
" idea of meeting the wretched man I came in
" search of, for, besides that I believe he will ex-
" piate his crimes by an ignominious death, I have
" received such a lesson from Boteler's admirable
" address to the villain previous to passing sentence,
" that I should be very wretched at the thought of
" engaging in a duel. In the beginning of next
" week I hope to press you all in my arms, and in
" the mean time I remain,

" My dear Sir,

" Your affectionate son,

" ROB. NEVILL, jun."

The anger and detestation which had been excited in my mind by Montague's conduct, and which always accompanied it when I thought of it, suddenly yielded, on the perusal of these letters, to the dreadful retribution now made; and I hoped that the mercy which it was proper to deny him on earth would be granted him elsewhere. I was still re-

flecting on the scandalous life and dreadful death of this wretched creature, when Mr. Jones came in. His countenance wore its usual benignity. He expressed his sorrow at my situation with that attractive voice and manner which first attached me to him. He examined me as to the particulars of the affair at Broke-hall, with my account of which he was perfectly satisfied. He said he should have pitied Sir Nicholas from his heart, as every body must have done, had he not so wickedly yielded to the passion of revenge in attempting to criminate me: "for, how dreadful," said he, "must his feelings "be, when he considers that his son fell by his own "hand. What puzzles me," continued Mr. Jones, "is, that when the offence he meant to punish is so "evidently more his daughter's than yours, even ad- "mitting that you knew of it, he should not have "declared the truth, and exculpated you in that re- "spect. It keeps the opinion of the public divided: "all his connexions and their friends, who amount to "a great number, are decidedly your enemies; and "that villain Murphy has prejudiced others. Sir "Nicholas, however, is by no means generally liked, "and there are many who agree with us in believing "your story to be the true one." Mr. Jones then informed me that as every body was talking of me, every body of course asked who I was. He had seen Mr. Whitaker, who had corroborated the account I had given of myself, and the circumstances had interested many in my favour. He said, that upon the whole, he had great hope, that instead of being injured I should be benefited by a trial. Having continued talking for some time on what immediately concerned the situation I was in, Mr. Jones condescended to converse freely with me on the subject of his son's attachment. "I was extremely "anxious," said he, "to divert John's affections to

" another object, and I thought it practicable; but " in this one instance I was unacquainted with his " heart, which I see is not to be turned from its first " possessor. She is indeed a noble girl, I do not think " there is a nobler upon earth, yet it is but very late- " ly that I have been able to reconcile to my mind " the thoughts of their marriage: however, I am " convinced that his happiness depends upon it, and " I am now as solicitous that it should take place as " I was formerly anxious that it should not. I con- " fess that I am at this moment very uneasy lest the " event once so much dreaded by me is not to be " accomplished. I have seen Miss Nevill; she is " inexorable: her resolution, she says, is taken, to " devote her life to religion and beneficent offices. " This resolution appears to be the basis of the peace " of mind she has recovered. Mrs. Alton assured " me that she would have fallen a sacrifice to melan- " choly reflections had she not taken this method of " rousing her into an enjoyment of existence, and " leading her to set a value upon life independent of " the common joys and sorrows that attend it. Her " soul is exalted above this world; I am afraid we " shall find it so to our sorrow; for since I have wit- " nessed the excess of John's attachment, I dread " to think in what his disappointment may termin- " ate." Delighted at this change in Mr. Jones's sentiments, I expressed my hope that the perseverance of his son and the united efforts of the families would be attended with success. " Her brother " too, Sir," added I, " will soon join the alliance: " Colonel Nevill must now be on his way to Ex- " Mount—"—" He arrived there late last night," said Mr. Jones. " I saw him this morning. You " know that the villain Montague was found guilty " of murder by a jury at Salisbury?" I replied in the affirmative, telling him that I had seen Colonel

Nevill's letters, and was impatient to hear the issue of Lord Colney's solicitation for a pardon.—"The "wretch has paid the forfeit of his crimes," said Mr. Jones, "his friends returned to Salisbury, with "a decided negative. It seems that he had not a "doubt of obtaining a pardon through the interest "used for him, and he kept up his spirits till the "dreadful truth was made known to him, which was "early on Monday morning, when he exclaimed, "'Great God!' his countenance fell, he turned "pale, and suddenly became depressed and abject. "Totally forgetting his situation and that of the "sheriff, he supplicated the delay of a few days, to "confess the errors of his life, and abjure his vicious "sentiments, as an atonement to society. He be-"came wild, and struggled with the officers who "went to carry him to the place of execution. At "the gallows he begged time for prayer, and abused "the permission by a long delay. All decent forti-"tude had forsaken him, and he whose courage no "man had ever doubted, who had several times "coolly staked his life in support of his crimes, "could not bear to face death when it was certain, "and the punishment of guilt. He would not rise "from his knees, and the executioner was obliged "to drive the cart from under him in that posture." What a dreadful picture was this of the once bold, elegant, handsome, accomplished Montague! what a contrast to the being who for years had in his heart defied both God and man! But let him rest, I have other objects that demand my pen, and shall here only observe, that, without expressing it, I considered his death as the removal of one great barrier to the accomplishment of my friend's happiness. Mr. Jones staid some time longer with me, in the course of which he apologised for suspecting me, on the information of Hewson, to have been ac-

tive in keeping Jones's passion alive. He said that Hewson meant well, though he was not blessed with that refinement which a liberal education bestows. He told me that he had plans in view for me, but that it was not yet time to talk of them, the first object being my defence, in which he advised me to have counsel to assist in examining the witnesses to be produced in court. To this I readily consented, being afraid of wanting the necessary confidence on such an occasion: but, having promised Brainbridge to employ no other attorney, I resolved to prepare my own case, to which Mr. Jones objected, saying that I was not sufficiently acquainted with the proper arrangement of legal evidence, and advising me to commission him to make Brainbridge an additional compliment of a couple of guineas, and to send his own attorney, Mr. Heartly, to take instructions for my defence. Tears of gratitude rushed to my eyes; I said that I was but too fortunate, that the hand of Providence was very evident to me in the interference of such a man, and I begged him to act in every respect as he pleased towards me. He replied in kind and encouraging language, and soon after went away.

This interview left a pleasing impression on my heart, and the reflections that arose from it were of the most flattering kind. Far from doubting that my innocence would appear, I anticipated a decent provision for the necessities of life, and exquisite felicity in the enjoyment of a friendship that stood on so firm a foundation: but I never suffered my mind to wander to the contemplation of a blessing which I could not connect with my gratitude towards the father of Louisa Jones.

In the course of an hour after Mr. Jones left me I was visited by Mr. Heartly, to whom I repeated my story, and we were consulting on the production of

evidence in my favour, when Thomas from Broke-hall came in. From him we learned that Sir Nicholas was more than ever determined upon my destruction; that Lady Broke was inconsolable for the fate of her mask, in spite of all Mr. Dalby's exertions to amuse her; that Miss Broke was locked up, and kept on bread and water; and that Murphy, though all music was at an end, went to Broke-hall, and was frequently closeted with Sir Nicholas. Mr. Heartly, finding Thomas disposed to serve me, made a great many enquiries of him. He said that the Baronet's pistols were hanging where they always did, and that he had himself seen them there every day since he was last with me: "and yet," said he, "they say the pistol you "shot the young squire with is in the coroner's keep-"ing till the trial: now that can't be, for I will take "my affidavit that the pistols you had in your hands "that night were no others than Sir Nicholas's own "pistols."—"Are you so very sure of that?" said Mr. Heartly, "it will be of the utmost consequence "if it can be proved."—"I'll swear to it, Sir, if you "please;" replied Thomas. "Very well, my good "fellow," said Mr. Heartly, "but it would be satis-"factory if some other person could attest the same "thing." On this Thomas ran over several names of those who were present, observing, however, that he soon lost sight of the pistols. Mr. Heartly then questioned him respecting Miss Broke. "La! Sir," cried he, "Miss Broke be one of the most frolicsome, "forward young ladies I ever seed in my life: the "butler can give a good account of she. It's the "common opinion of all our servants that she has "made Sir Nicholas a present of a grand-child: but "time will show." This was capital intelligence; and Mr. Heartly, after some more talk with Thomas, desired him to be in the way in the afternoon, to assist in serving the subpœnas he should send up to

Broke-hall, and congratulating me on the points we had gained went to prepare briefs for counsel. I spent the remainder of the day in anticipating a complete triumph, and far from fearing the event of a trial, became anxious for it.

The next morning I again saw Mr. Heartly and Mr. Rundle; but it was not till near four o'clock that Jones came to me. He was still pale, and his countenance bore the marks of fresh anxiety. "The "conversation I have had with my father respecting "you," said he, "has given some relief to my mind. "I am glad you will have counsel—"—"Pray think "not of me just now," cried I, interrupting him, "but tell me about Miss Nevill; tell me what has "passed between you and Mrs. Alton."—"Sophia," replied he, endeavouring to restrain his emotions, "Sophia is determined to kill me. I have been the "whole morning at the Hut without seeing her. "She left it to avoid me: cruel, cruel Sophia!"—"Has she heard of the fate of Montague?" said I. "No," replied he, "Mrs. Alton tells me his name "is never mentioned before her. Mrs. Alton, Mor"land, is one of the most rational and most amiable "of women. Were it not for the interest she takes "in my unhappy fate I should be unable to endure "it. She received me in the most friendly manner, "and when I asked for Sophia, assured me that it "gave her pain to tell me that she had gone from "home to avoid a meeting. 'But come,' said she, "'sit down, and let me fulfil my promise that you "should understand me in our first conversation. I "love Sophia as a daughter, as such I have adopted her, "and she is now the dearest object of my heart in "life. I see you are come prepared with arguments "to convince me of the unreasonableness of our "plan, and to overturn our resolution: now, I mean "to save the time you would bestow on reasoning

" with me, and on soliciting my interference, by " treating you with the utmost candour. But I must " first beseech you to govern your feelings—'—' Ma- " dam,' cried I, interrupting her, ' I intreat you to " consult your own feelings before you join the go- " vernment of mine with a sentence of despair.'— " ' Hear and understand me,' replied she, mildly; " ' to give you hope would be to deceive you, and I " therefore wish you not to extract any from the " confidence I am about to repose in you, lest your " disappointment be the more painfully felt. I have " preserved the life of the woman you love, restored " her health, revived her self-esteem, and I know " how valuable as well as how lovely she is. Every " wish that I have formed for her has been accom- " plished; every wish but one: and that, which I " believe will never be accomplished, is, to see her " bestow her hand on you.' I leave you, Morland," said Jones, " to conceive what an effect this unex- " pected declaration had on me. I started, I seized " Mrs. Alton's hand, I looked as if I doubted my " senses. ' ' Is it possible?' cried I, ' is it possible! " am I awake! If you are my friend, I must, I must " hope!'—' This is what I feared,' said she, ' and it " will be difficult for me to convince you of the con- " trary. Sophia's resolution has been deliberately " taken; but to judge how unalterably, you must hear " the conclusion of her story, which will make it ne- " cessary to tell you some of my own, but it shall be " brief.' She then proceeded to relate some of the " events of her own life, and the commencement of " her friendship with Sophia:

" ' I am a cousin of Mr. Rundle's,' said she, ' and " originally bore the same name. I was married " early in life to a man little older than myself. He " was a noble-minded youth, worthy the lasting at- " tachment he inspired me with. He had fortune

" and friends, but his active spirit led him when
" a boy to embrace the profession of a sailor, in
" which he had distinguished himself previous to our
" marriage. He was still a lieutenant when we were
" united, but he was promoted in the course of a few
" months, and appointed to the command of a ship.
" Our first separation was our final one: he fell in
" the service of his country. My grief was deep,
" and nearly occasioned the loss of my life when I
" gave birth to his daughter. The sight of my in-
" fant restored me to a sense of the value of my own
" existence: I resolved to mourn with less danger,
" to think of my husband, and, remaining his widow,
" enjoy in imagination my attachment to him as long
" as it pleased God to leave me on earth after him,
" but at the same time to devote myself to his child.
" At first I lived sometimes with Alton's relations, and
" sometimes among my own, in the neighbourhood of
" Overton, where, as my Sophia, for her name too
" was Sophia, advanced in years I formed an establish-
" ment of my own. I will not talk to you of the beau-
" ties and virtues that gradually opened and matured
" under the eyes of a happy mother; I will not paint
" the new felicity which it pleased the Almighty to
" bestow upon me for some years; I will not dwell on
" the misery that succeeded it; not, however, because
" I am unable to bear the reflection, but because I
" would hasten to a subject more interesting to you;
" suffice it to say that I lost my child in her nineteenth
" year. Her sense, her talents, the love that united our
" hearts, the length of time we had passed together,
" all conspired to overwhelm my mind. I felt this
" blow even more than that which had been given
" by the loss of her father: I sunk under it: for more
" than two years an intermission of reason took place;
" my child seemed perpetually before me; but I have
" no recollection of any occurrence during that time.

" At length my perceptions gradually became regu-
" lar, I again knew the persons and things about me;
" but a settled melancholy continued to prey upon
" my heart. I found no relief but in imaginary in-
" tercourse with my Sophia and her father, till, with
" a view to confirm my hope that we should again
" meet, I applied myself to search in every discourse
" and essay for the arguments that proved a reunion
" after death of those who loved in this world. This
" reading led me to the most interesting topics of
" religion, and I was at last brought to that resigna-
" tion which it is the part of reason to promote in
" opposition to feeling, and which gives such an ad-
" vantage to those who early cultivate the virtue of
" self-command. The acquisition, however, was
" gradual, nor was it complete till my care and at-
" tention were turned upon Miss Nevill. My cousin
" Rundle, called into Hampshire by family affairs,
" had seen me twice after my loss of Sophia: the
" first time was while I was in that deplorable state
" that prevented my being sensible of his presence;
" the second time he came to Overton I was in
" the progress of amendment. He was very kind,
" and his conversation was so agreeable to me
" that I greatly regretted his being settled at such
" a distance. Some months had elapsed after his
" second journey to Overton when I was surpris-
" ed by a visit from him in the autumn, two years
" ago. He came expressly for the purpose of paint-
" ing to me the wretched situation of the Nevill fa-
" mily at that time, and to interest me in the fate of
" Sophia. He spoke warmly of her virtues: my
" imagination met his wish more than half-way, and
" before he made the proposal which was the object
" of his visit, I eagerly expressed a desire to take
" her under my roof. I saw that I gave him great
" pleasure: he told me, however, that he had not

"'mentioned his design to the Nevills, being deter-
"'mined first to sound me on the subject. As we
"'perfectly accorded, our plan was soon aranged. I
"'accompanied my cousin to Exeter, he made the
" proposal to Mr. and Mrs. Nevill, and I was intro-
" duced at Ex-Mount. Miss Nevill, by no means
" out of danger, still kept her room: her melancholy
" was not to be diverted, but she became accustom-
" ed to hear me talk, and when at the end of a fort-
" night I opened our plan in the form of an invita-
" tion, she embraced it with tears of gratitude, telling
" me that her mother had made her acquainted with
" the extent of my goodness. The physicians who
" attended her were of opinion that her case was
" hopeless, that she might by care be kept alive for
" some time, but that a recovery would be little less
" than a miracle, recommending at the same time a
" change of air and of objects as the most likely
" means of success. We contrived to remove her
" without a formal separation from her father and
" mother: the former, wretched in mind and suffer-
" ing from his wound, had not been permitted to see
" his daughter before my arrival, but on the arrange-
" ment of a plan for her, and after some serious con-
" versation with Mrs. Nevill and myself, he became
" more resigned, and he saw her several times. His
" returning fondness, however, had no power to re-
" concile her to herself: she did not weep, nor did
" she seem gratified with his renewed caresses. No
" particular day was fixed for our departure, but
" both Mr. and Mrs. Nevill for several days be-
" fore we left Ex-Mount repeatedly promised to pay
" me a visit in less than a month, and I stole Sophia
" away one morning under pretence of an airing.

" 'At first, I feared that I should see the prediction
" of the physicians verified, but I had recourse to the
" remedy which I had found beneficial to myself. I

" conversed with her on topics beyond this sphere, I " told her my own misfortunes, and I read to her the " books that had been able to divide my attention " with the cause of my malady, while at the same " time I took the utmost care that her exercise and " diet should be regular and proportioned to her " strength. In a little while I saw a change for the " better; I had fixed her attention, and the perpetual " appeal to her reason at length began to gain ground " against the tyranny of sentiment. My joy could " not have been greater had I given her birth than " it was at this revival of her faculties and of her sus- " ceptibility of rational enjoyment: and in being useful " to my dear young friend I reaped great advantage for " myself. She took the name of Alton, according " to Rundle's plan, from her first coming into Hamp- " shire, and with those whom I was bound at that " period to admit to my house, I passed her as the " child of a friend whom I had adopted; I constantly " spoke of her as of my daughter, and she was soon " generally considered as such. In the course of " the year she recovered her health perfectly; I was " charmed with her good sense and amiable qualities: " I was convinced that she loved me, I saw my own " Sophia in her, and while I looked forward to a re- " union with the beloved spirits who had left our " world, I yielded my heart to the happiness this " lovely girl excited. Conscious that her misfortune " had not arisen from any vice in herself, that she " had expiated her error, she recovered her spirits " with her health, but she tempered them with re- " flection, and resolved, as I had done, never to mar- " ry. We agreed to devote our lives to religion. " Do not misunderstand me. We did not mean to " become zealots, we did not think an officiousness " in religion acceptable to its divine object. Our " resolution was to address him together regularly,

" to devote more than ordinary time to study his will,
" to keep it in mind, and to be active in the perform-
" ance of it. To cultivate cheerfulness in chosen
" retirement, but not to forsake society altogether:
" seeking that, however, in which we might be use-
" ful. This has actually been the course of our life
" for more than eighteen months past. Sophia is
" charmed with it. We have had repeated visits
" from the Nevills, who are, if possible, fonder of
" their daughter than ever. Poor Mr. Nevill cannot
" attain that resignation without which his happiness
" must remain embittered; I need not tell you that
" his health is still impaired. He could not live
" without Sophia for such intervals as were unavoid-
" able from the distance between our dwellings, and
" at the beginning of this year he projected the plan
" of our removal into Devonshire, which we put into
" execution early in the spring. He privately pur-
" chased the Hut which was then to be sold, and we
" had been here about a fortnight, when you acci-
" dentally met Mary coming in a post-chaise from
" Teignmouth, in the neighbourhood of which So-
" phia had been staying at a retired house with her
" father, while the workmen from Exeter were fi-
" nishing some alterations at the Hut under my eye.
" He brought her home to me the day before, leaving
" her maid to follow with her things. From that time
" we have lived in a very retired manner, taking
" every caution when we go abroad, to prevent So-
" phia's being recognized. Simpler dresses than
" those she was accustomed to wear formerly, and
" the change of name, have succeeded beyond our
" expectation. Even to Mr. Jones our abode was
" unknown till his present return to Affington; for
" her father, knowing his sentiments, had kept the cir-
" cumstance from him as well as from every body else.
" Mr. Nevill has a bed at the Hut, and lives more

" here than at Ex-Mount, taking a delight to be
" nursed by Sophia. Your message by Mary made
" her, very thoughtful: decided as to herself, she took
" your happiness into consideration; she conversed
" with me upon the subject, and endeavoured to
" convince me that it concerned your honour to
" place your affections differently, as it did her's to
" remain unshaken in the resolution of continuing
" single through life. She said she felt that this re-
" solution was the basis of the esteem she had re-
" gained among those who knew her story, and that
" to change it, or even to waver about it, would be
" to forfeit that esteem, and what was perhaps worse,
" her own. Not only her relations would be disap-
" pointed, but she should be execrated by your fa-
" mily. These are her sentiments. With respect
" to mine,' continued Mrs. Alton, ' I will frankly own
" to you that on this subject they are not in unison
" with her's. I think she would not only make you
" happy, but that she would be happier herself, and I
" assure you she would make me happier. I know
" that she has an angelic spirit, and it ought to have
" a greater range than it has at present: she should
" be at the head of a family, and the sex should learn
" from her how to recover an error or a false step
" which proceeds from the villany of men, not from
" inherent vice. So far from losing the esteem she
" has gained, the part of her story which remains
" unknown would be generally spread, and the most
" religious and the most virtuous would be the fore-
" most and the highest in their applause. I have
" urged these sentiments to her, but I am sorry to
" say I have only made her unhappy. What is
" more, your father has been suing for you with the
" same effect. He yesterday proposed your union to
" Mr. Nevill, who brought him here. Nevill was
" neutral. Sophia rested her opposition on the vir-

" tue she sees in adhering to her resolution, and on " her friendship for yourself. She declared that she " loved you, but that she preferred your honour and " the principle she had adopted to any prospect, how- " ever flattering. She shed tears at the kindness Mr. " Jones lavished upon her, and was at last so affect- " ed that the conference was broken up without any " conclusion. She secluded herself the greater part " of the rest of the day, and is now absent because " I expected you.'

" Such, my dear Morland," continued Jones, " is " the sequel of Sophia's story, which I have given " you in the words of Mrs. Alton, as they were im- " pressed upon my memory, and as they are more " interesting than mine would have been."

I was extremely gratified with this account of my friend's lovely mistress, and even the difficulties raised to his happiness, though I wished them removed, charmed me, for they rendered her the more worthy of him. I said every thing I could to relieve his anxiety, and we spent some hours endeavouring to find hope for him in Mrs. Alton's conversation, and talking of the evidence to be produced for and against me at my trial.

CHAPTER XXV.

Containing such surprising events that ill-natured critics will adduce them as illustrations of the marvellous.

SELDOM has it been the fortune of a prisoner to receive such consolation as fell to my lot. Misfortune poured friends upon me; a prison allured visitors: my cause divided the whole country into two par-

ties; my innocence being openly espoused by all the friends of the Joneses and Nevills, while I was pronounced guilty by all the connections of the Broke family. The interest excited by the approaching trial was unexampled; every lodging in Exeter was bespoken for the ensuing assizes; every room, every street echoed with the name of Morland; poor Morland! the unknown orphan adopted by the brewer's widow, left destitute by her death, doomed to a philosophical livery by the humane misanthrope of Reading, to canonicals by the tasteful lady of Broke-hall, and to a halter by her husband.

The solemn crisis now drew nigh, the judges had finished their business at Dorchester, and were proceeding to Exeter. It was at this awful moment, two days previous to the opening of the sessions, that I received a hasty, unaccountable note from Jones, brought by a post-boy, containing these few words: "I have only time to say that I shall not be "with you again for some days, but be assured that "you shall see me before the trial." To this was added his initials only: the whole was written with a pencil on the back of an old letter, and unsealed. It made me extremely uneasy, as I feared something dreadful respecting Miss Nevill, for I was certain that no other cause on earth would have separated him from me at this juncture. The post-boy whom I questioned, could give me no farther information than that he set out before day-light, accompanied by a middle-aged lady, in a chaise with four horses, which had taken him as fast as they could lay feet to the ground to Honiton, where he only stopped to write the note, a relay of the same number of horses having been got ready by an out-rider to go forward to Axminster. I imagined the lady to be Mrs. Alton, and that they were perhaps gone after Miss Nevill, who, I took it into my head, had re-

turned to Overton. My anxiety increased when I found I could gain no satisfactory explanation either from Rundle or Mr. Jones himself, who did not fail to visit me. They avoided my questions, by saying they were in the dark respecting the object of his journey, but were not uneasy about him, as his family now concurred in *all* his sentiments. I could hardly abstract my thoughts sufficiently from Jones to attend fully to Mr. Heartly's conversation on the preparation for my trial, or to read the briefs which he left in my hands till the counsel came to town. In short I was bewildered in a labyrinth of inexplicable surmises, and when I heard that the judges were arrived I was extremely dispirited, for I had placed great reliance on having Jones present at my trial, and in spite of his note I dreaded an impossibility of his return in time.

The sessions were opened, Judge Boteler sat on the criminal side. I expected to be carried into court the first day, but it was spent in trying a number of petty offences. Jones was still absent. The next day came, and the court was again opened, but I heard nothing of him. The keeper gave me notice that I should be called up in the course of the morning; Jones was still away. In spite of the encouragement of his father, Rundle, and some other friends, I felt a great dejection; I thought I perceived something of mystery in their manner, and I suspected that though they wished me well, they feared the evidence against me was too strong to be repelled. I was confirmed in this suspicion from knowing that Mr. Jones was one of the grand jury, and I conceived that he had prevented the return of my friend that he might run no risk from being present at an unfavourable verdict. These were my reflections when the keeper, Mr. Ward, came himself for me. I accompanied him with a heaviness of

heart more oppressive than I had ever felt before. The suit of mourning which I had purchased out of respect to Mrs. Waller, and which I had ceased to wear on going to Broke-hall, was still in good condition, and I dressed myself in it on this occasion. In going into court I summoned all my resolution to appear with the confidence and serenity of innocence, lest my dejection should give any colour to the charge against me; and when put to the bar I really felt a composure that enabled me to attend and to act deliberately. The court was crowded to excess: the gallery belonging to the grand jury was filled with ladies; on the bench with the judge sat a number of gentlemen, among whom I perceived Mr. Jones near his Lordship on the one side, and Sir Nicholas Broke on the other, the former looking like an angel of light, the latter like a demon of darkness. Dispersed through the court I observed several faces with which my imprisonment had made me acquainted. There was not a spot unoccupied, except a seat between the judge and the sheriff on the bench, the box kept vacant for the witnesses, and a little space among the counsel, which seemed reserved for some of their friends. Every eye was turned on me. After the solemnity of arraignment, to which I pleaded not guilty, I addressed the judge; for my counsel were at a distance from me, sitting below the bench; I said: "My "Lord, charged as I am with so horrible an offence, "it is natural for me to wish to have the advantage of "a testimony that might lay open to you and to the "jury who are to pronounce my fate the nature of "my opinions and sentiments in hours of security "and confidence. I did hope, my Lord, to have "heard an account of me given to you by one, "whose honour, integrity, and noble mind are well "known to your Lordship; an account which no

" one else can give so well, however favourably " disposed towards me, as there is no one with whom " I have been so familiar, so unreserved. Till " within a few days he has been my constant com- " panion in prison; he is now, I know not why, ab- " sent, but I expect him back every minute: were I " not afraid of encroaching on your Lordship's time, " I would solicit you to defer my trial another " day, in the hope of receiving the support of his " testimony." As I said this, Mr. Jones whispered to the sheriff, who immediately spoke to the judge, on which his Lordship said to me: " It is no less " my duty than my inclination to give every indul- " gence to persons in your situation, when it ap- " pears that no abuse of lenity is intended: but I " have just received information from the sheriff " respecting the gentleman you allude to, which " would render the indulgence you crave nugatory." I was now convinced that Jones was purposely sent away, and I prepared to sustain the event of my trial with firmness.

The jury being sworn and the indictment read, the counsel for the prosecution stated the accusation against me at length, saying that he had positive proofs to satisfy the court and jury that after corrupting the daughter of a man of distinguished family and fortune, I had deprived his only son of his life in such a manner as by the law was considered in the light of murder. I felt myself extremely agitated by his language, and was more than once going to interrupt him, when I recollected that it was the common harangue on all similar cases. Having stated the legal definitions of murder, and distinguished them from those of manslaughter and other homicides, and declaimed against ingratitude and seduction, he concluded his speech with assuring the jury that it would give him great pleasure to

find, upon hearing the evidence, that there was no foundation for the charge against me ; but that from the instructions he had received, my crimes appeared to him much deeper than he had allowed himself to describe previous to the examination of the witnesses. He said that the superabundant weight of evidence he found on his brief rendered it unnecessary for him to torture the feelings of a parent, and that he should therefore prove the charges against the prisoner without calling upon Sir Nicholas Broke, who was, however, in court, subpœnaed by the prisoner, on what ground he could not conceive, unless it were to add to injuries already but too dreadful. He then ordered Murphy to be called. While the officers were calling him, the tipstaffs were crying, " make way for the counsel," and endeavouring to open a passage, which they with difficulty effected, and I saw, to my great astonishment, a young counsel pushing forward, followed by Jones, and almost at the same time Mrs. Alton led by the sheriff to the seat on the bench next to the judge. Jones, as he passed, looked at me with a cheerful, animated countenance, nodded and smiled. He took a seat with my counsel facing me, and directly under the judge. As he and Mrs. Alton had engaged all my attention at the moment, I did not notice the face of a person who appeared to take the advantage of pushing on with him, till I saw him also seated with my counsel, and then to my surprise I recognized my old and first friend, Mr. Scot, the Curate of Reading. We immediately acknowledged each other by looks, and I expressed as much gratitude as I could by my countenance, for the interest he continued to take in my unhappy existence. To put himself to the expence of such a journey, merely to speak in my favour, retrospectively, was a new proof of extraordinary benevo-

lence under the exterior of misanthropy. Jones's return again puzzled me: I was wrong in my surmise of his father's sending him out of the way, and it was clear that the judge had proceeded with the trial on being informed that he was at hand. I had no time, however, to indulge conjecture, for Murphy was now in the witnesses' box. He was dressed, if possible, more foppishly than when I first observed his transformation, except that he had not a coloured neckcloth. When the oath was administered, I shuddered as he kissed the book. Great God! thought I, with what deliberation does this creature perjure himself! And is it in nature that a friendly reprehension, that the rebuke of a little personal vanity, that an interference to prevent moral corruption, should have engendered such villany in the mind of a human being! Alas! time has proved to me that Murphy is not a solitary example of this depravation of nature. At first, on being told by the counsel to state what he knew, he gave his evidence roundly, larding it with argumentative inferences to show its truth, from which he could not be restrained by the repeated admonition of the judge to confine himself to facts. He declared that he saw Miss Broke go into my chamber, and he inferred seduction from her previous attentions to me, particularly on the day of the rehearsal. He prided himself on having given notice of what was passing to Sir Nicholas, and swore positively that I blew out my candle to avoid being seen; that as he and Sir Nicholas came up to the door he heard Mr. Broke, who had run on first, call me a villain, on which I fired at him. He declared that he entered the room in time to see the flash of the pistol; that Sir Nicholas caught hold of my hands, desiring him to run for lights, which he immediately did, and on returning with them, joined by some of the com-

pany in the house, he found Sir Nicholas struggling with me, and so exhausted that he let go my hands with the pistols in them, and swooned. On being cross-examined by my counsel, it appeared that he had sworn positively to my blowing out the candle from inferring that Mr. Broke would not have done it, and that therefore I did. He swore also positively to the pistols which were now produced, and said they were the pistols taken out of my hands. I had not the least recollection of them. Murphy prevaricated a great deal on his cross-examination, and attempted to give inferences for proofs, which, together with his dress and self-conceit, disgusted all present. He was succeeded in his evidence by persons who proved the fact of Miss Broke's being in the chamber. After these the surgeon, who examined the body of the unfortunate young man, gave his testimony, with which the evidence on the part of the crown closed. The judge then told me that it was the time for me to make my defence. I looked from him to Mrs. Alton, and then to Mr. Jones, whose countenances were full of encouragement. In Jones's face I read thorough confidence: in that of Sir Nicholas I saw conscience struggling with the devil; in addition to his downlook his jaws seemed unnaturally fixed, as if in the act of grinding his teeth. Before I spoke, I surveyed him nearly a minute steadily but mildly, during which he could not look me firmly in the face. This could not but be observed by every person in court, whose eyes were cast alternately on my prosecutor and on me. A dead silence prevailed from the eagerness to hear what I had to say for myself. It was the most awful moment of my life. In attempting to address the court, I no sooner uttered; "My "Lord!" than I found my voice fail me. Observing that I hesitated, the judge said; "speak firmly,

" you shall be heard with every indulgence. If you " know yourself to be innocent, the reflection should " give you confidence." Roused by this excitement, I renewed my address:

" My Lord," cried I, " I am sensible, whatever " be my fate, that I have a fair trial, and that I re- " ceive every indulgence my unhappy situation " claims. Your Lordship has called upon me for " my defence. How shall I make one when the " best I have to say depends upon my own word " and upon the kind opinion I have lately gained in " the minds of some worthy men? The proofs " against me have been given positively, while what " I have to allege can only be favourable circum- " stances. I am an unfortunate being, my Lord, " ignorant from whence I sprung, gifted, I know " not why, with the education of a gentleman, and " unexpectedly thrown upon the world to make " my way through it as well as I can. I will give " your Lordship a brief account of myself, as there " are some respectable characters present who are " able to corroborate it."—I here related shortly the chief events of my life at Reading and Oxford; the curate's counsel and my repugnance to it, the kindness I received from Mr. Jones, and the friendship his son had honoured me with on hearing my story, omitting, however, all that related to Miss Nevill. When I came to the part of my history that occurred at Broke-hall, I mentioned the circumstances that had gained me Lady Broke's favour, without blending them with ridicule, and I stated Sir Nicholas's manner of looking at me, and his intention to have me sent out of his house, with as much simplicity and moderation as I could. I spoke of my sitting in the alcove, and declared that I had hardly entered my room when Mr. Broke came in, and blew out my candle. In giving an ac-

count of the events that immediately caused my imprisonment, I found it difficult to speak of Miss Broke, and I assured the judge that I wished to pass over her conduct unnoticed, both on account of her youth and sex: "I shall simply declare, my Lord," said I, "that as I hope for mercy from the omnis-"cient, who knows what is passing in the bosoms "of all men, in mine as well as in Sir Nicholas "Broke's, I neither knew, nor in the slightest de-"gree suspected, that that young lady was in my "chamber, till she was found there by some of the "company who had been drawn thither by the re-"port of the pistol that proved fatal to her brother. "I shudder to say by whom it was fired—my Lord, "it was *not* fired by *me*." As I said this, I looked with a degree of compassion at the wretched man who, I well knew, was conscious of the act. His eye was instantly averted. "You have heard a man," continued I, "positively swear that I did fire it; "what then will my denial of it avail me? I have "some hope, however, that the jury will balance "against this the equally positive manner in which "he swore to my blowing out the candle, as also the "point of view in which his character will be placed "before the evidence is closed. My Lord, I was "the means of rescuing that Murphy from a situa-"tion in which it is probable he would have perish-"ed, of his obtaining a good livelihood, the notice "of many respectable families, and flattering pros-"pects: this I will prove; I am afraid that I shall "not be so fortunate in establishing the facts that "gave birth to his inveteracy. You see his figure: "emerging from the seeming modesty in which his "poverty bound him, he suddenly appeared at "Broke-hall in this fantastical attire, with the addi-"tion of his neck enveloped in a coloured silk hand-"kerchief. This is not all; I found among some

" songs for his scholar, the volume now in my at-
" torney's hand. My Lord, I thought I might ven-
" ture to ridicule and advise him." Here Mr. Heartly handing up the poems, formerly mentioned, to the judge, Murphy was observed endeavouring to slink away, and Mr. Jones pointed it out to the sheriff, who immediately called to him to come back, on which the judge ordered the officers to keep him in court, and then desired me to proceed. " My " Lord, I did laugh at him, I did advise him, and I " robbed him of his book. From that moment, he " dismissed all his gratitude, if ever he had any, " and became insolent, shameless, and malignant. " He has perjured himself to gratify his revenge. " He has perjured himself not only in stating that " Mr. Broke fell by my hand, but if I have been " rightly informed, in stating that the pistols pro-" duced to-day were those found in my hands on " the fatal night. I was too much agitated to ob-" serve them, but I understand that it will be made " to appear to your Lordship and the jury that these " were not the pistols. On this circumstance I " place great hope: but in making my defence be-" fore a judge and a jury of such penetration per-" haps the best testimony I can adduce in my fa-" vour is that of nature and of conscience." I stopped again some moments, riveting my eyes on Sir Nicholas, who looked determinedly another way. I then continued: " From the moment I was put " to this bar, I have been endeavouring to catch " the eye of my prosecutor; I have endeavoured in " vain; it has turned in every direction but on me. " I now challenge it, my Lord. Sir Nicholas Broke! " if you know me to be the murderer of your son, " blast me with a father's look." I paused again: the poor, conscious wretch made an effort to cast his eyes upon me, but their sight hung on the persons

in the middle of the court, and could not reach the bar at which I stood, while his head, leaning to one side, bore the character of one of those obscene birds, that, gorged with carrion, look as if ashamed of their filthy intemperance. "How merciful, my Lord," said I, "is this father, whose son I have murdered! "Sir Nicholas! you and I both know by whose "hand your son fell—it is also known, Sir, to God, "who is as certainly present in this court as we "are." I spoke emphatically, and from my soul. The self-condemned villain, who had for some time observed that the sense of the court and of the surrounding crowd was in my favour, unable longer to support himself under the united oppression of conscience, and the suspicious looks that were darted upon him from every quarter, lost his poize, sunk into a swoon, and would have fallen forward, had he not been caught by his friends who were sitting by him.

The confusion which this created interrupted the trial. There was a general buz throughout the court: every one seemed eager to seize the opportunity of making his observations; the jury talked together in a knot; the counsel got up on their seats to speak to the judge; Jones smiled, and rubbed his hands. Having leisure to look round me, I cast my eyes up to the grand jury box, where I plainly perceived, though not in front, my amiable friend Mrs. Jones and her lovely daughter. This was a new excitement to my heart, my spirits were already afloat, and the smile I received from them both was an earnest to me of a complete triumph. Hoping that Jones's journey had been as successful as I wished it, I looked round the box for Miss Nevill, but I could not see her. Sir Nicholas being carried out of the court under the charge of the sheriff, who was desired by the judge to detain him when recovered

to give his evidence, silence was again proclaimed, and his Lordship desired me to proceed, observing that Sir Nicholas might be examined after the other witnesses. On this I told his Lordship that I had nothing to add, and that I should leave the examination of the witnesses to the gentlemen at the bar. I will not enter minutely into the account of this examination, which occupied a considerable time, and in which the counsel displayed great ingenuity. Murphy was severely handled by them, and so manifestly falsified his own evidence by his contradictions and inferences, that the judge ordered him to be indicted for perjury. Thomas's evidence was decisive; the worthy fellow not only swore that the pistols had been changed, but produced the right ones, which he acknowledged he had dared to go and take out of his master's apartment that morning, unknown to any one. These pistols being held up, struck two gentlemen in court who had joined the party that came into my room, and on the recollection they immediately offered their testimony. Thomas's account of the frolics of the young lady who was found in my chamber, of which he spoke from his own knowledge, was equally satisfactory in respect to the purity of her character previous to my going to Broke-hall. My innocence now became so manifest, that the counsel for the prosecution honourably declared his conviction of it, saying that he should not ask the jury for a verdict, which his Lordship must see was due to the prisoner. The jury did not wait his Lordship's answer, nor to deliver their verdict by their foreman—not guilty, not guilty, was loudly and indignantly exclaimed by every man in the box, and echoed from every corner of the court.

My sensations may be easily imagined. Again every eye was upon me, till Jones was heard ad-

dressing the judge, when they were turned upon him, and a dead silence once more prevailed. The first words that struck my ear were—"I charge him "with murder, my Lord, and on that charge I de- "mand of your Lordship that Sir Nicholas Broke be "committed."—"Mr. Jones," said the judge, "do "not let the enthusiasm of your friendship cloud "your reason. Be satisfied with the honourable "proofs of Mr. Morland's innocence, and do not "think that the dreadful event can ever in law be "held murder against Sir Nicholas."—"No, my "Lord," replied Jones, "the crime with which I "now charge him, is not the death of his son—I "accuse him, my Lord, of the murder of Mr. Mor- "land's father—I accuse him of a premeditated de- "sign to murder, under colour of the law, my noble "friend now acquitted, the son of Sir Edward Broke, "in order to secure himself in the possession of the "estates and honours, which he so infamously ac- "quired, and which belong to the man whose life "he has sought, whose innocence and magnanimity "your Lordship has this day witnessed." I will not pretend to describe what I felt: indeed, strong as my feelings were, I doubted whether they were real; I questioned whether they were not the effect of a romantic dream, resulting from the im- pression of the active scenes of the day. I gazed at Jones, and endeavoured to wake myself: but I did not believe my senses till the words, *I am safe again*, uttered by Sir Nicholas in the chamber after he thought he had shot me, rushed into my mind: satis- fied that *they* were not the effect of a dream, and re- collecting his extraordinary conduct towards me, I saw a reasonable connexion between them and the assertions of my friend, and I listened with awe and admiration to Jones, as he unfolded the providential discovery that had been made. The astonishment

and gratification of every person in court were visibly painted on their faces: never was attention so eager for information or so pregnant with hope. "You amaze me indeed," said the judge; "but I "must have sufficient grounds to proceed upon, be- "fore I can commit any man."—"I will imme- "diately lay those grounds before your Lordship," replied Jones; "I only request that I may accuse "him to his face."—"Let Sir Nicholas Broke be "brought into court," said the judge. As he entered, a murmur of indignation ran throughout the crowd. He hung his head: he never after held it up. "Sir Nicholas Broke," said the judge, "you "are accused by a gentleman of known honour and "respectability, of the murder of your cousin, Sir "Edward Broke, and I have sent for you that you "may hear the grounds on which this accusation is "made. Go on, Mr. Jones."—"This," muttered Sir Nicholas, "is all a conspiracy against my life, "all revenge."—"My Lord," said Jones, "per- "mit me to preface the grounds of my accusation "with a few words respecting my friend. I cannot "but think that the interference of Providence in "his case is very manifest, and I am proud to say I "believe no man ever deserved it more. Unknown, "and in adversity, his good sense, his feelings and "his manners made an impression on the mind of "my father, that induced him to talk kindly and "warmly of him, and I loved the man through such "praise before a seemingly accidental meeting esta- "blished a friendship between us. From that time "I have had his heart open to hourly inspection, "and I consider myself as the most fortunate of "men in having engaged its esteem. Had it not "been for the breaking off of the trial by the indig- "nation of the jury, I should have testified his be- "nevolence to the miscreant whom your Lordship's

" justice has devoted to the pillory, and I should " have spoken circumstantially to virtues with which " I am well acquainted; but I shall now content " myself with this short tribute of friendship, and " proceed in developing to your Lordship the shock- " ing event that has hitherto buried my friend in " obscurity, and robbed him of his rights."—

The insertion of this effusion of Jones's, I fear, will have the appearance of vanity to a stranger, but it is to myself the most valuable paragraph in my history, and I cannot consent to lose it.

" My Lord," continued Jones, " there is a lady " in court, near your Lordship, Mrs. Alton, who " was applied to about a fortnight ago by the keeper " of the gaol, in behalf of a young woman of the " name of Norman, who was committed to prison in " a deranged state of mind. She is an inhabitant of " Overton, where Mrs. Alton has long resided. " Talking rationally at intervals, she mentioned her " knowledge of that lady, to whom the keeper's " wife communicated the unhappy situation of the " poor girl, who proved to have been a favourite of " Mrs. Alton's, to whom her family is known. Mrs. " Alton procured her discharge and took her home. " For some time she continued wild, having short " intervals of recollection. With proper care, she " recovered entirely. Having talked incoherently " of a murder that was to be found out, of her Wil- " liam, and asked for her dove, she was questioned " when it was thought safe, and being treated affec- " tionately by Mrs. Alton, unbosomed herself to " that lady. She told her that her father was taken " ill last spring, soon after Mrs. Alton left Overton; " that for some time he had a hope of recovering, " but at last his mind seemed very heavy, and no- " thing that he took did him good, so that he was " given over: that when he was sure he was dying,

" he was very unhappy, and called together her
" uncle Christopher, her brother, and herself, to his
" bedside, where he told them he was so miserable
" that he could not bear the thoughts of death, and
" after crying, and praying God to forgive him,
" confessed that he had been employed by the pre-
" sent Sir Nicholas Broke to kill Sir Edward, his
" wife and infant son, who were returning home after
" Sir Edward had for many years been supposed to
" be lost at sea; that he was Sir Nicholas's butler at
" the time, and was tempted by the great offer he
" had from him to commit the horrid deed: that no-
" body knew of Sir Edward's return, as he had
" written only to his father, supposing him to be
" still alive, and the letters had fallen into the hands
" of the present Baronet who had taken possession
" of Broke-hall: he told them that being sent to
" meet the travellers at Portsmouth, as Sir Edward
" had requested, with money, he had contrived to
" take them separately along the shore to an unfre-
" quented spot where he had previously prepared a
" grave, in which, having perpetrated the deed, he
" buried them. That having brought no servant
" and little baggage with them from Havre-de-grace,
" where they had embarked, they had received no
" attention at the inn at which they put up, and
" were never enquired for by the people: he said
" that he had been particularly charged to make
" away with the child, but that he was quite dis-
" armed by its smiles and its affectionate manner of
" clinging to him, which made him shed tears of
" remorse for what he had done, and he resolved to
" take care of the infant, then about a year old:
" that he accordingly ordered a chaise, saying that
" its parents had sent him for it, and he left Ports-
" mouth with the child and luggage without being
" suspected, and travelled across the country to

" Overton, where his brother was married and " settled in a small farm, with whom he left the lit- " tle boy, giving him the name of Edward Morland, " till he went back to satisfy Sir Nicholas, and re- " ceive his reward: that the Baronet, for this ser- " vice, gave him the sum of two thousand five " hundred pounds to buy a small estate near his " brother's farm, and settled two hundred a-year " upon him for his life: that he immediately married, " and resided upon his own estate to farm it: that " not being able to endure the sight of the child " whose parents he had murdered, he got his brother " to carry him to a widow lady at Reading, who " having no child of her own, was glad to take " charge of him, both because she wished for a child, " and because she received an ample stipend for it " annually: that in time losing his wife and several " children, he was visited with severe compunctions, " which made him increase the sum he paid to the " lady, whose name was Waller, on condition that " the boy should be brought up as a gentleman, " and that she should never inform him or any body " that she was paid for taking care of him: he con- " fessed that he had found among other things in " Sir Edward's trunks the certificate of his mar- " riage, and another of the birth and baptism of his " son, which he had kept more through a wicked " motive than with any intention of doing justice, " for he meant, if ever Sir Nicholas should become " slack in his payments, to let him know they were " preserved: he owned that he was frightened at the " same time at having them in his possession, and " that he had hid them in many different places, till " at last a dove, which his wife was fond of, meeting " with an accident and dying, he had the bird pre- " served, and, in the inside of it concealed the cer- " tificates, which were still there: that after this

" confession he besought them to make every re-
" paration for him they could, by disclosing the
" circumstances to young Morland, who was un-
" doubtedly Sir Edward Broke; and that he then
" went into a fit of raving, and died.—My Lord,"
continued Jones, resuming his own direct informa-
tion, " all this, which was stated to Mrs. Alton by
" the young woman, will be clearly proved. That
" lady immediately consulted my father and Mr.
" Nevill, and knowing my friendship for Mr. Mor-
" land, did me the honour to admit me into the con-
" sultation. The poor girl, Amy Norman, whose
" communication I have stated, as well as her bro-
" ther, whose name was *William*, was extremely
" affected by this dreadful confession of a father.
" Christopher Norman, their uncle, was also struck
" with horror, and it was agreed among them that
" Mr. Morland should be informed of the circum-
" stances that so essentially concerned him, but
" that the deceased should first be buried. Having
" reflected on the consequences of a discovery, the
" uncle changed his opinion; he showed his nephew
" and niece that they would be reduced to beggary,
" besides bringing infamy on the family; and ar-
" gued that as the young man knew nothing of the
" matter, it would be no loss to him. William and
" Amy reluctantly submitted to their uncle's rea-
" soning. The crime of the father preyed day and
" night on the hearts of the children: they were
" afraid to disclose it, yet wretched in concealing
" it. William had no enjoyment in the property
" that was left to him, and Amy was ashamed of the
" mourning she wore. He took a resolution to leave
" the farm to the management of his uncle, to come
" into Devonshire, and admonish Sir Nicholas Broke
" to make an ample provision for Mr. Morland.
" He imparted his design to Amy: the thought

" gave her some relief, and she approved of it. The
" preserved dove, which had become a favourite of
" her's, after her mother's death, and which, still
" in her possession, contained the important testi-
" monials of my friend's right of inheritance, was
" put into her brother's trunk, to be at his com-
" mand if he should find it necessary. At the time
" he came to Exeter Sir Nicholas was at one of
" the family estates in another part of the kingdom.
" This is ascertained both by his letters to his sister,
" and by Mr. Rundle who knew him. The unhappy
" youth was seen wandering about the country:
" he would frequently go and lay himself along
" the ground under a linden-tree in Affington
" church-yard, on the very spot beneath which his
" remains have been since deposited. My Lord, he
" pined himself to death: and he died without in-
" forming his sister of his danger, or the surgeon
" who attended him, Mr. Rundle, of his affairs, or
" even of his name. In his last letter to his sister,
" however, he desired her, if she did not hear from
" him again, to inquire for him of Mr. Rundle;
" and on his death-bed he requested that gentleman
" to have the dove put into his coffin, and if a young
" woman of the name of Amy inquired for William,
" to assure her that it was in the grave with him.
" Her brother's absence and the cessation of his
" correspondence affected Amy's brain, and she was
" confined for a considerable time. When she re-
" covered some glimmerings of reason, her brother
" and her dove floated on her mind. She left Over-
" ton to come in search of them; she found her way
" in a stage-coach to Exeter, where for speaking
" incoherently, she was sent to gaol. My Lord,
" loving Mr. Morland as I do (I must still call him
" by that name) I entreated my father and my
" friends to suffer me to take upon me the manage-

" ment of a disclosure that was to raise my friend " to the station to which he was not only entitled " by law but by worth. On the intelligence given " by Amy Norman the first step taken was, with the " sanction of the bishop of the diocese, to open the " grave and coffin of her brother. Our most reve- " rend prelate deemed the case worthy of his per- " sonal attendance. The dove was found and opened " in his presence, and in the presence of several " gentlemen known to your Lordship: the certifi- " cates being taken out, were read aloud by me, " and afterwards separately by all present, and then " given into the bishop's custody. Our next step, " my Lord, was to secure the evidence of the uncle, " and as Mrs. Alton knew him well, she and I set " out together with the utmost expedition for Over- " ton. This man did not appear to be sensible of " the degree of his crime in concealing the shocking " fact that had come to his knowledge. When he " found it was known, he was not confounded, but " told all he knew of it without hesitation, excusing " his conduct by saying that he thought it was bet- " ter, after so long a time, to let matters remain as " they were, than to raise such a terrible outcry as " there would be against his brother. Uneasy at " the absence of his nephew and the state of his " niece, he had actually gone over to Reading to " see Mrs. Waller and Mr. Morland; but finding " the former dead, and the latter gone from the " country, he returned home confirmed in his si- " lence. He very readily, however, consented to " testify the fact, and is now at hand, as are all the " witnesses on this important occasion. I now hope " that your Lordship is satisfied that there are " grounds for committing Sir Nicholas Broke on the " charge I have preferred."

The sensation produced in court by this speech is

beyond expression. Jones was the object of a general admiration, which was restrained from breaking out into rapturous applause, only by a sense of the solemnity of the place, and of the accusation. "Is "Christopher Norman in court?" said the judge. "I am he, my Lord," answered a man among the crowd, whose face on his speaking I remembered to have frequently seen at Mrs. Waller's, though he never took particular notice of me. He was sworn: after which the judge said to him: "You have "heard what that gentleman has stated respecting "the confession of your brother William Norman, "and the part you have yourself acted in the mat-"ter. Is it correctly stated?"—"My Lord, I am "sorry to say it is all too true."—"Look at Mr. "Morland: is he the person whom your brother "brought an infant to your house?"—"He is, my "Lord: I carried him myself to Mrs. Waller, and I "have not missed seeing him twice every year "since, when I went to Reading with the half-yearly "payments for him." The judge then asked the bishop if he was satisfied with the testimonials in his hands. "I am, my Lord," replied the prelate; "they have every mark of authenticity. They con-"sist of a licence signed by his Majesty's ambassa-"dor at Constantinople, for the marriage of Ed-"ward Broke and Matilda Maitland, to which is "annexed a certificate of the celebration of it, "signed by the chaplain, and another certificate of "the birth and baptism of their infant son. The "chaplain who signed these papers is now a digni-"tary of the church, and I am well acquainted with "him."—"It is quite sufficient, my Lord," said the judge; "yet there is an obscurity in the long ab-"sence of Sir Edward Broke, and his remaining "abroad when he should have been at home: but "that will be for future consideration." He then

turned to the accused wretch, who stood motionless at a little distance from him, petrified into a stupid amazement, and said: "Sir Nicholas Broke, I am "not surprised at the appearance you make; but it "is not for me to anticipate your condemnation: "my duty is to have you secured; that your guilt or "innocence may be established by a jury of your "country." Confounded and unnerved, the miserable creature made no attempt to reply, but suffered himself to be led away like a brute, stunned and indifferent to its fate.

The court breaking up, I hastened to join Jones and my friends, from whom I had previously received many congratulatory signals. Mrs. Jones gave me an affectionate nod from the jury box; Miss Jones bowed sweetly. I was introduced by Mr. Jones to the judge, who gave me joy of the events of the day. Mrs. Alton shook me by the hand. The Curate of Reading smoothed his brow, and giving me a hearty squeeze, said he was inclined to think that there was some justice still remaining in the world. The counsel for the prosecution vied with those on my side in their compliments, and wherever my eyes turned they were met with smiles. It was some time before the court was cleared, and when I accompanied Jones out, I was received with shouts and huzzas by all ranks, my trial having excited a very general expectation and interest. Mr. Jones's post-chaise being in waiting, Jones made me get into it, saying that the family would return home in the coach. We stopped at the gaol to take up my trunk, and in the course of half an hour I was in Affington-house, where I was soon surrounded by a band of noble friends. I was presented to the Bishop, who had been invited to dinner; and I was introduced to the Nevill family, to the Colonel, Clara, Tom, and Anne, most of whom had been in court, though I

knew them not. If I was overjoyed, if I was happy, I was not forgetful of the great ruler of events; I was not ungrateful to the hand that had led me to happiness: the thought of the interposition of Providence accompanied every enjoyment, and the elation of my spirits was rendered sweeter to me by the reflection, that the giver of life was also the disposer of it.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Which may be omitted by those great and learned critics who cannot suffer the preceding chapter to escape their rod.

THERE was yet much wanting to complete my felicity. Till Jones was happy, sorrow could not but have a share in my heart, and the thought of the fate of my parents for a long time disturbed many of the hours allotted to repose. From the moment of my leaving the court, Mr. Jones and all his friends, satisfied of my right, treated me in every respect as the legal owner of the estates which were still in the possession of the murderer of my father, and would have given me the title annexed to them, had I not objected to receiving it before my right was formally recognized in a court of law, till which I joyfully accepted a room at Affington-house. During the latter part of the joyous day that restored me to a knowledge of my birth, the thoughts of my prosperity frequently gave place to my anxiety for the fate of Jones. After we rose from table, I went to single out Mr. Nevill, trusting that his conversation might give rise to a hope of his adding his influence in favour of my friend. Indeed he seemed to single me out. His countenance was pale, his nerves unstrung. "Sir," said I, "in spite of the sudden stream of pros-" perity that flows upon me, I feel, even in the midst

" of the most cheering smiles ever bestowed on man,
" that I cannot be happy, while he who has been so
" active an instrument in the promoting of my welfare
" is doomed to pass a life uncheered by those smiles
" on which he has fixed his happiness."—" My dear
" young friend," said Mr. Nevill, with a faint but impressive smile, " I have been a broken-hearted
" man for many, many months: I had given up all
" hope of ever being thoroughly myself again, but I
" think I shall date my restoration from this day: it
" is my holiday as well as yours. My child, after
" resisting all the arguments of Mrs. Alton, enforced
" by those of our friend the Bishop, yielded to the
" tears of her father. Gently," exclaimed he, seeing me ready to burst into rapture, " gently, or you will
" diminish your own enjoyment. Your friend con-
" cealed the happy turn of your affairs, in order this
" day to increase your pleasure by surprise: you
" shall repay his friendship by a similar surprise. It
" is contrived for you. We are all here but as one
" family. The Bishop and my son are at this mo-
" ment on their way to the Hut to bring the Altons
" over, and you shall have the satisfaction of present-
" ing Miss Alton to your friend." The pleasure I had felt in the former part of the day was indeed great, but I can truly say, that the pleasure which these words of Mr. Nevill gave me was still more lively: I could hardly restrain my joy: I would fain have imparted it immediately to Jones, but Mr. Nevill prevented me: I kept my eyes upon my friend, anticipating his delight, while I avoided speaking to him till I mastered my emotion. I then drew him aside, and after repeating my sense of the part he had taken, and acknowledging the effect of the surprise he had prepared for me, I led to that which was prepared for him, by saying, that my felicity would have been complete had Sophia been

present. "I have kept her all day as much as "possible from my thoughts," replied he, "that "I might enjoy your triumph unabated, but I con- "fess she has, notwithstanding, stolen several times "into my mind: no wonder, Morland, for she is al- "ways in my heart. Cruel, cruel Sophia! she can "return to Ex-Mount, she can bless her family with "her society; to me only is she cruel: but we will "not talk of her to-day."—"We will, we must "talk of her," cried I, "and we will and must "talk to her too, till we convince her that her per- "severance, far from being a religious duty, deprives "virtue of a triumph due to it." I continued talk- ing with him till the re-appearance of the Bishop and Colonel Nevill convinced me that the Altons were in the house. The former coming up to us entered into conversation with Jones, while the latter gave me an intelligible nod, on which I withdrew.

In the hall I met Mr. Nevill, who told me that my friends of the Hut were in Mr. Jones's library; "I "shall go," said he, "and introduce you to Sophia, "and then Mrs. Alton and I will leave you to pre- "sent her to your friend."—"You are determined, "Sir," said I, "to unite in showering blessings upon "me, and none that I have received is equal to this." He then led me to the library, where we found his daughter, elegantly dressed, in company with her two mothers. Having resolved to comply with her father's wish, she was far superior to the affectation of suffering her appearance to contradict her compli- ance; her person was adorned with her former taste, and her countenance had resumed the impressive cheerfulness of conscious rectitude. I was dazzled with her beauty. She smiled as her father present- ed me, and said that she was happy in being able to heighten the enjoyments of the day. "Your "friend, Sir," added she, "deserves to be happy,

" and since he persists in placing his happiness on " my passing my life with him ; since it is the wish of " both our families ; and since wiser heads and better " minds than mine have directed me on this occa- " sion, I enter freely and unreservedly into this little " conspiracy of our friends to surprise him into what " they are pleased to call a reward for his surprising " you so happily."—" The surprise of the evening, " my dear Madam," replied I, " is still more preci- " ous than that of the morning. Let me not delay " it a moment. May I bring my friend directly?" I stood in a posture ready to fly for him, when Mrs. Alton caught me by the hand and said: " take Mrs. " Nevill and me with you." Mr. Nevill accompa- nied them, and going into another apartment gave me an opportunity of conducting Jones across the hall without his seeing them. When I returned to the company he was still in conversation with the Bishop, who, on my joining them, left us to make an answer to a question purposely put to him by Mrs. Jones.

I took my friend by the arm, and leading him to the door, said ; " how frequently, Jones, does it hap- " pen that the most striking and happy events of a " man's life take place when least expected, when all " hope is relinquished: but the chain that is obscure " to us is visible to Providence. How entirely had " I relinquished a hope of tracing a family; how little " did I yesterday think of the flattering occurrences " of to-day? Cheer up, cheer up, my friend; who " knows but another morning may bless you with " the yielding smiles of your Sophia."—" I will not " talk of Sophia to-night," said Jones, " why should " I damp the joy you must feel by telling you that I " have now relinquished every hope?"—" You do " not damp my joy," cried I, " this dereliction of " hope is the threshold of your bliss: was it not " mine?"—" Hear me, then," said he, " since you

" will talk of Sophia. She has for some time past " gone frequently to Ex-Mount, where her conduct " has convinced me that her resolution is not to be " shaken; judge when I tell you that my mother as- " sured me that she has been endeavouring to pre- " vail on Clara to win my affections, though the dear " girl declared that she could only think of me with " the regard of a sister: despair, bitter despair is my " portion, my dear Morland; but once more, I entreat " you, let us resolve to drop the subject, at least for " to-night." Saying this, he pressed one of my hands, while with the other I opened the door and drew him into the hall. " To-night!" replied I, " I " gave Fortune till to-morrow to complete her ope- " rations; but as you so absolutely despair, she must " really perform her task to-night." Jones looked at me as if to ascertain whether I had not taken more champagne than was consistent with his de- spair. " Yes, Jones, yes," cried I, in a rapture of joy, " I am dazzled with the beauty of your mis- " tress—" He now gazed at me with amazement— " but," continued I, " it is neither Broke-hall nor the " bottle that inflames me—come, my friend, and " drink of the cordial that has flown up to my brain." Jones, as he afterwards told me, having never before seen me so elevated, really attributed my spirits to li- bations to which I was unaccustomed: but, when cast- ing open the door of the library, I presented Sophia to his view, Sophia, once more herself, the Sophia of Ex-Mount, his intoxication exceeded mine. He flew forward, exclaiming; " do my eyes deceive me?" —" I leave you," said I, " to discover whether that " smile be an indication of cruelty, or of tenderness: " when you have determined the point, come and " share your feelings with those to whom you are both " so dear."

It would be an unnecessary, perhaps tedious, prolongation of these memoirs to describe circumstantially feelings and occurrences obvious to anticipation: suffice it to say that Jones soon returned to his friends, completing the joy of the day by bringing with him the lovely mistress of his heart. We all pressed around them with congratulations; every embrace Sophia received gave me fresh pleasure, but my delight was inexpressible when I saw her in the arms of Louisa Jones, to whom I once more dared to raise my thoughts. Yes, I hoped again; yet I still hoped prudently. It was true my prospects were brilliant, but I had to reach the objects they presented. Sir Nicholas was still the master of Broke-hall, and I resolved not to breathe a syllable of my passion till my fate was completely decided: a resolution I managed, with some difficulty, to keep literally; while in reality it was broken again and again the very day I took it; my anxiety to secure my chair at table next to her, my assiduities in the evening, in short every look and motion betraying the passion she had inspired. It was not long, however, before my self-imposed restriction was removed. From the moment Sir Nicholas was committed he never opened his lips either to utter a word or to admit sustenance. An universal stupor pervaded his frame, leaving him without the power either of remorse or repentance on the one hand, or of a struggle to defend his crimes on the other; he died in gaol on the fourth day of his confinement, a dreadful example, among the many instances that have occurred, of the decided interference of Providence, even in this life, against the murderer. My birth and title were not left to depend merely upon the certificates which had been preserved by the father of Amy: Lord Powis, formerly the Honourable William Dalston, ambassa-

dor at the Porte, and the Rev. James Grainger, his chaplain, now a canon of Windsor, testified personally the marriage of my parents and my birth.

It appeared that my father had been shipwrecked on the northern coast of Africa, where, saving himself by swimming, he had been seized by some of the Moors and kept in a state of slavery, from which, after a captivity of four years, he had escaped in an English vessel bound to the Levant. Arriving at Constantinople, he made his case known to the ambassador, who supplied him with money till he should hear from home; in the mean time he joined Mr. Maitland, a gentleman of eccentric character who had been travelling with his daughter over the classic ground of Greece; and who was accidentally killed in an excursion up the Bosphorus. He then returned with Miss Maitland to Constantinople, where they were shortly afterwards married. The credit Mr. Maitland had established died with him, but the funds left by that gentleman in the possession of his daughter were sufficient to enable the married pair, after repaying the advance received by my father from the ambassador, to pursue a taste they had both imbibed for visiting regions rendered precious to their imagination by early reading. They returned to the capital of Turkey, when I was about to make my appearance on the grand theatre of life, into which I was soon after ushered .Disappointed in his expectation of letters and remittances from my grandfather, my father again wrote, taking the precaution to send a duplicate of his letters with the ambassador's dispatches. Eight months more elapsing without his receiving any answer, when he began to be alarmed, finding that the money he had received with my mother was rapidly decreasing, and after loitering two months more in hope of letters, either from his family or from hers, they resolved to set out with the

remainder of their funds, which, with economy, might carry them across the continent. My mother had written to her uncle and other relations, but unfortunately her letters had been inclosed in the dispatches to my grandfather, and had of course fallen into the hands of Sir Nicholas.

Their surprise at the silence of their friends, and these circumstances in general were perfectly remembered by Lord Powis and Mr. Grainger, who had also some faint recollection of a report of their being lost in crossing the channel, but it was not much talked of. Such testimonies, with the figure which Sir Nicholas, conscience-struck, had made in the court before Judge Boteler, were sufficient to convince even the adherents of that wretched man. I may add, however, as collateral proofs, that in the trunks preserved by Norman were some short notes from my father to my mother, sealed with the Broke-arms, and several trinkets belonging to the latter, which were recognized by her cousins, who vied with each other in acknowledging me as the son of Matilda. To complete conviction, a strong resemblance of my person and features to those of my grandfather were observed by many persons who well remembered him. In the course of the winter, my pretensions were fully established, and I was regularly put into possession of Broke-hall in the spring. It would be indelicate in me to paint my own courtship, and the gradual condescension of my Louisa. There was nothing romantic in it to interest a stranger; no distress, no obstacle, no jealousy, no duel: she thought me worthy of her love, and she pledged it with her hand. Jones and Sophia took the start of us, they were united before Christmas; it was in the month of June in the ensuing year, that I led my Louisa to the altar, followed by a host of kind and happy friends, among whom were the amiable Rundle, and Mr. Scot,

formerly curate of Reading, now a prebend of Exeter cathedral. Broke-hall was open for many weeks, and if *my* Lady Broke had not precisely the taste of her predecessor, she was at least more esteemed and more beloved.

And here I should close these memoirs, but that it behoves me to satisfy that curiosity which I may have excited, respecting the fate of several persons who have been mentioned in them. Foremost then, my patron, the vicar of Holcomb, who sent me a conciliatory message by Mr. Scot the day after my trial, lives on his vicarage, alternately breaking out in sudden rage and persuading himself that he has conquered his passions; resolving and re-resolving, ready to quarrel and ready to be friends. He likes a good dinner, and often finds one at Broke-hall, from which I hope no testy fit will estrange him, as I sincerely forgive his believing his old friend Sir Nick in preference to me when I was thrown into gaol. Murphy, after standing in the pillory on a conviction of perjury, fled the country, but has since returned to Andover, where he again fiddles at the Spread Eagle. Mrs. Nicholas Broke has retired to an ornamented cottage in the Isle of Wight on five hundred a-year, which I settled upon her for her life, on her forgiving her daughter, to whom I promised a fortune of ten thousand pounds, whenever her conduct should be such as to attract the regard of a man of sense who would make her his wife; in consequence of which she was married six weeks after to Mr. Dalby, for I did not insist much on my proposed terms, and I am told they live very happily with their mother, who is still fond of her son's poetry. Flora, Iris, and Urania, turned actresses, and joined the Exeter company. Radley, my hermitage friend, on hearing of his master's commitment, broke open his escrutoire, and robbing it of all it contained, to the

amount of some hundreds, escaped safe to Bristol, where he embarked for America. As Jones, though he forgave, could never like Hewson, Mr. Jones obtained a place in the excise for him. Amy Norman married a young man to whom she was attached previous to the discovery which proved fatal to her brother William and distracted her for a time, and they are settled at Overton. Thomas, my faithful Thomas, preferred living with me as my chief personal servant, to a profitable post which I offered him; but he is amply provided for, and I should have been sorry to lose him.

MORLAND.

THE SECOND TALE;

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE SURPRISING.

——— ex fumo dare lucem
Cogitat, ut speciosa dehinc miracula promat.

HOR.

Forth from a cloud of smoke he breaks to light,
And pours his specious miracles to sight.

FRANCIS.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

SECOND TALE.

THE author having finished the perusal of his novel, received some compliments from his friend.

FRIEND.

I see that the characters you have drawn are such as human nature offers to the pencil, and I am inclined to believe that most of the events are rather facts that occur to your memory than inventions of your imagination. I own that the piety and morals you have put together are very edifying; but ninety in a hundred will think your story deficient in seasoning. We want surprise excited, inconsistencies reconciled, and apparent impossibilities explained into obvious results.

AUTHOR.

I thank you for the ten you have given me in a hundred, their opinion is dearer to me than that of the other ninety, whom I have no ambition to amuse with a series of riddles; for such must be the romance you recommend: so now for *your* MORLAND. I trust he is marvellously marvellous, to serve for a companion by contrast, as some connoisseurs match storms with calms.

FRIEND *(producing his manuscript.)*

Here it is. Your piece will undergo all the seve-

rity of criticism, while mine will be considered as an amusing *bagatelle*, and be spared.

AUTHOR.

Nothing more likely: begin.

FRIEND.

You remember that your first chapter was the starting point for us both. We suppose our Morlands the same person at the time he leaves Reading for Devonshire, only I have chosen to take the story into my own hand, that is to say, to use the third person instead of the first: in every other respect I copied your beginning exactly. I find we were both of opinion that he should be sent into a Baronet's family: there, however, all similarity ceases. I need not read the first chapter to you, I shall therefore begin with the second.

MORLAND.

CHAPTER II *.

It is much easier to flatter oneself with resolutions of philosophising, than to put in practice the maxims of philosophy. Neither the mind nor person of Morland was of that strong masculine nature that seems formed to withstand the attacks of adversity. With books in his hands he was very magnanimous, but left to himself, he was the veriest child in nature, with much sensibility and more credulity. As to his person, he was of the middle size, easy and light; his features, perhaps a little too regular, and certainly too delicate for those of a man, were set off by a fine skin, and the most beautiful teeth and hair. On his arrival at Holcomb, the vicar received him kindly, but not with the distinction due to a gentleman, and the poor fellow spent a miserable fortnight at a paltry lodging at Exeter, before Mr. Whitaker had it in his power to fix him.

At the end of that time a young man who waited on a lady in the neighbourhood of Holcomb suddenly eloped with an heiress, and afforded the opportunity for Morland's succeeding to his place,

* Should the reader's memory want refreshing, it may be easily done by turning to the first chapter in the sixth volume.

which his patron immediately obtained for him, and had the goodness to go himself to the Baronet's seat, on the day appointed for Morland's first appearance there, for the purpose of presenting and recommending him.

It will be proper here to give some account of the family into which Morland was to be received. Sir Robert Wallingford, of Cray-hill, was one of the richest Baronets in England, about five-and-forty years old, and equally free from vice and virtue. He gave his money so willingly, that it was easy to see he would have been a generous man if he had not been born a rich one; but having been surrounded in his youth by flatterers and sharpers, his knowledge of mankind being gained only from them, he was convinced that men did not deserve beneficence on principle, and he might therefore be said rather to part with his money than to bestow it. He had too little resource in himself, and was too dependent upon others to be a misanthropist; and he mixed in society without enjoying it. With the gentlemen in his neighbourhood he exchanged dinners, but he never pushed the bottle, and he bore the fatigue of hunting, because they did. At races no one seemed more delighted, or more eager; he laid large bets, but always covered them by hedging. When in London, he frequented the fashionable coffee-houses in the day-time, but without eating or drinking: at night he was seen whereever there was gaming and routs, seemingly very much interested in every thing, yet always without being really so. In public places he mixed with the people to make himself popular, and ogled all the pretty girls he met at Ranelagh and Vauxhall, in order to be thought a libertine. He appeared at court to be taken for a man of quality, and pushed himself in among the nobility, courting their fami-

liarity, in hopes of being looked upon, in time, as one of them: but he was the only person who forgot the date of his creation. In the House of Commons he always voted with the ministry, of whomever composed. Such was Sir Robert's public character. In private, he was of easy manners, and, allowing for some fits of passion, good to his family. Governed by the pride of property, he valued every thing that belonged to him at double its worth. A horse bought for thirty guineas was estimated at sixty, after it had been a week in his stable. This pride extended to his estates, his family, his servants: Lady Wallingford alone, of all that belonged to him, received no colouring from it. Of her he always spoke impartially, and he lived with her on terms of cold civility.

Her Ladyship, younger by some years than her husband, had become equally self-important. When young she was carried to Paris, where she was tired to death; every thing appeared to her insipid, and detestable; but, on her return, she wearied all her acquaintance in town and country, with the delightful things she had seen in France. In her youth her person had been good; she still supported her pretensions to beauty, piqued herself on wit, and strove to attract attention by every means in her power; in which she succeeded in some degree by the unaccountable whim of making every thing about her in London appear like the country, and by displaying in the country the forms of the town. She was of course a mighty housewife in London, was inexhaustible on rural subjects, and perpetually boasting of the delights of a country life. On the contrary, at Cray-hill, her whole conversation was of court, and town anecdotes, the theatres, fashionable people, and favourite novels. She treated the country gentlemen as idiots and brutes, and received their

wives and daughters with overstrained politeness mixed with a studied and insulting inattention. In other respects Lady Wallingford was as well to live with as Sir Robert.

Matilda Wallingford, their only child, destined by her ambitious parents to an alliance in the highest ranks of the nobility, united with a great share of beauty a mild and feeling heart, and a happy disposition. Her education had been neglected, as it was not in the nature of the Baronet or of his Lady to give a just and steady attention to it: they were both of them deficient in capacity, and, to a certain degree, in tenderness. Matilda's great merit, in her father's eyes, was that of being his daughter; while Lady Wallingford thought her too handsome to be shown in London, and, at the same time, was certain that country circles afforded no company proper to form her manners: she consequently left her much to herself, and was not at all solicitous to see her acquiring in the world, talents and ideas.

But the lovely girl, now in her seventeenth year, whose reason opened of itself, in the kind of solitude in which she was kept, neglected nothing that could advance the education which seemed to be refused her. She had, unnoticed, made a considerable progress in music, by the instructions of an Italian musician, whom her mother, through whim and fashion, had retained in the house; and she had learned French from a Frenchwoman who had long waited on Lady Wallingford.

Such was the family: Cray-hill, the seat where they chiefly resided, was six miles from Holcomb. The vicar was there before Morland, and no wonder, for the former rode and the latter walked. The poor fellow, appearing as a servant, was accordingly examined from head to foot, and questioned on his abilities; circumstances too unimportant to be de-

tailed. If any thing gave a novelty to so common an occurrence, it was Morland's extreme embarrassment and confusion. The present moment and his future prospects were equally humiliating. Unable to answer the questions put to him by Sir Robert and Lady Wallingford, he looked up to the vicar as if to beg assistance, and the worthy Mr. Whitaker undertook the task, and made amends for his silence, while he, standing like a criminal, on whom sentence was going to be passed, trembled lest he should be rejected, and yet dreaded to be accepted. The graces, however abashed, are still the graces. A blush tinged his face and animated his countenance. With downcast eyes, his arms hanging loosely, and his body awry, he had a noble air, and appeared well made in every point of view: nay, he could not be awkward in any attitude, and his very silence bespoke intelligence.

The Lady rung for her maid, whose name was Justine, and ordered her to give him the livery to try on. He followed with a melancholy aspect. The clothes were new and becoming, and happened to fit him exactly. Having dressed himself, he returned for the approbation of his lady, who was very well pleased, and ordered her maid to go with him, and give him his instructions, a commission which Justine undertook with an appearance of the greatest satisfaction.

CHAPTER III.

Justine led, and Morland followed, to the storeroom. "*Allons!* Edward," said she to him, calling him by the name which he was to reply to in fu-

ture, " my Lady likes you; and it is not every body " that pleases her, I assure you: *voilà vos affaires en* " *bon train;* you may look upon yourself as a lucky " fellow. Will you eat a bit of bread and cheese for " your luncheon? we have some excellent beer. I'll " go for a tankard for you, myself." Saying which she took up a silver mug and tripped away with a smile and a *coupee*, leaving the cheese and a loaf before Morland. When she returned, she found him not eating, but weeping. " Tears! Edward!" cried she; " I hope they are tears of joy. Come, eat. Do " dry your eyes—you have a nice pair, of your own. " I really don't think I have seen such since the day " I left Paris. Pray eat."

Morland suffered himself to be persuaded by Justine, who expressed her pleasure. " Now I begin " to be satisfied with you," said she, " you are " yourself again. Come, take a draught of the " beer—I hope we shall be friends. I have already " some little right to your friendship, for my Lady " always consults me before she determines on any " thing. It will be your own fault if you don't get " more and more in favour. I'll tell you how to ma- " nage. You will want my assistance, Edward. It " requires experience and management to make " one's way in a house like this, where there are so " many people, such a spirit of contradiction, such " idiots and brutes. Why, my Lady has three " other men besides you; but that is so much the " better for you, as you will have more time to your- " self: indeed you have little enough to do; only to " keep my Lady's apartments in order; the most of " the work belongs to the other men: you are in " fact merely a kind of page, more for show than " use." Morland turned up his eyes. " *Dieu!* " how bright they are!" cried she, smiling; " they will see a great many women about the

" house, but such eyes are formed to distinguish ;
" you will not be able to endure the vulgar crea-
" tures. As for the men, you must bear with them ;
" but don't get drunk with them, I charge you.
" *Allons!* take another draught, and then we'll go
" and see what's to be done in my Lady's rooms.
" But what's the matter? You don't speak—are
" you not pleased?"—" O yes, Mademoiselle, I
" am indeed," replied Morland with a sigh, and breaking a silence he was more disposed to keep.
" You will be still more so," replied she, " at least
" I hope so : let us mind our hits. To-night, in
" three words I will let you into the character of the
" master and mistress of the family, and into that of
" every body in the house. Attend to me, and if
" you go wrong you won't have to complain of Jus-
" tine's advice."

Morland had fallen into good hands. Mademoiselle Justine was susceptible, and her heart was agitated with a new and lively emotion, but far from opposing, she completely yielded herself to it.

Several days passed without any interesting occurrence. Justine observed Morland's extreme reserve, and the unhappy look which he had not been able to throw off; and suspecting that he had something on his mind, gently reproached him at times for his want of confidence. Morland scrupulously performed all the business allotted him, after which he usually retired to his chamber. He did not affect avoiding his new acquaintance, but he never sought her. Justine modestly complained of it.
" What do you do in your room?" said she to him ;
" solitude is fit for people that are as well hid as
" seen ; but look there, Edward, look in that glass,
" do you see any reason there for hiding yourself?"

" I do not hide myself," replied he, " I like to
" be employed : I read."—" You read! Oh, if you

"but knew French," said Justine.—"I do a little," replied Morland. "You do!" exclaimed she, "how "charming! I will be your French mistress, and "make you perfect in the language. I'll teach you "a French song directly." Saying which she sung a verse of a popular air, and Morland, pleased with the melody, yielded to his musical inclination and sung the second: the words he pronounced ill, but his voice was mellow and in tune. It turned poor Justine's head. "Oh!" cried she, in raptures, "we will "often sing together, I'll teach you as many as you "like. Mademoiselle Wallingford might have im- "proved herself with me; we were going on very well, "but an Italian fellow, who came here last year, quite "turned her head. She is incessantly squalling the "vile ditties he taught her. That thing," continued she, pointing to a case in the corner of the hall, "con- "tains an old instrument that he brought here; it "*was* a forte-piano."—"A piano!" exclaimed Morland, delighted; "is the key with it?"—"O "yes," replied Justine, "the key is with it; but "it is all to pieces. As long as it could sound, "Mademoiselle Wallingford was eternally thrumb- "ing accompaniments to her Italian airs. I teach "her French, from which the piano diverted her "attention, and as I have a sincere affection for "her, I silenced the accomplice of her lost time. "By the by, Edward, I think you are not dis- "agreeable to Mademoiselle. I took notice that "she kept her eyes upon you, not only conde- "scendingly, but kindly." Morland looked down, blushed, and changed the conversation. "Pray," said he, "are Sir Robert and Lady Wallingford "satisfied with me?"—"My Lady," replied Justine, "likes whomever and whatever I like: it is "I that regulate her taste, just as I fashion her "caps. As to the Baronet, if you are but toler-

"able, it is enough that you have been in his ser-
"vice a week, he would not exchange you for one
"of the king's pages."

While Justine was talking Morland examined the piano, and handled the instrument and the key as if he knew what he was about. "*Comment!*" said she, "can you play on the forte-piano?"—"A "little," replied Morland, "and if I might use "this, I would try to put it to rights."—"Take "it into your room," said she, "I know a number "of songs, and I will teach them to you."

Having made himself master of the piano, Morland went to Exeter, and got all that was necessary to put it into order, which was soon done, and Mademoiselle Justine was more than once under the necessity of listening to it through the key-hole, for he generally locked his door.

In spite of all this coldness, she was not to be repulsed. The heart she proposed for a conquest was new to the world, and had by a strict education been diverted from all notions of gallantry; yet it discovered some little friendship for her, some confidence, and if it seemed rather cold to her, it was ice itself to all others. Many a fine castle in the air has been built on slighter foundations; besides, Lady Wallingford was generous, Mademoiselle had made the most of her place and had put by something handsome, so that there was nothing to prevent her looking forward to a marriage, and settling as a milliner in London; and if the thoughts of such a settlement with a handsome husband was delightful to the imagination which they filled, there was no doubt but that a young man reduced to the sad necessity of wearing a livery must be equally flattered with such a prospect.

Justine, it was true, was five-and-thirty years old, but her complexion had preserved much of its

bloom; her countenance was expressive, her person good, and her manners, naturally easy, appeared still more so by the contrast of those of the English women in her situation of life: the more she considered herself, the more certain was she, that she was a dangerous being; but neither her advances nor her charms had any effect on the heart of Morland. An unfortunate circumstance had thrown him into a servile state, but in that state his soul retained its pride. He aspired above it; a serious engagement with a lady's maid would have fixed him in it for life, and as for any other connexion his education and his principles opposed it. Perhaps a passion more noble but less suited to his situation had already taken root in his heart. He every day saw the lovely Matilda during the hours appointed for the repasts of the day, and could not but do justice to the affecting, simple graces that animated all she did and said. If his eyes met hers, the effect was like a flash of lightning; and he instantly looked down, with confused sensations, the nature of which his want of experience prevented his detecting. Naturally prudent as he was, had he been aware of it he would have shuddered at his folly, and avoided his danger by flight; but it was his fate not to be sensible of it till too late, till his poize was lost, and his reason entirely subdued.

Meanwhile the first symptoms of his malady began to act powerfully on his mind. The pleasure of seeing Matilda every day made him forget the humiliation of his situation, and endeared to him those moments that, when his business was over, he could devote to solitude. Shut up alone in his room, she became, without his perceiving it, the object of his reveries, the spring of all his actions. At first he had taken pleasure in lively airs, and preferred harmony to expression; he now began to delight in tender

and pathetic strains, and Mademoiselle Justine had the mortification to see him through the key-hole dying away in ecstasies, as he played the Italian airs she detested so much.

She now lost all patience, and by insisting, and making a noise, she obliged Morland to open his door. "Why, Edward!" said she, "you are driv-"ing yourself mad: I don't wonder you are so "thoughtful and melancholy; you will throw your-"self into a consumption. Devil take all the Ita-"lians! they have driven gaiety out of Europe, "and have contributed more to fixing the spleen in "England, than newspapers, fogs, coal-fires, punch, "and dram-drinking. If I have made you hate "French airs, play Scotch jigs: but if you persist "in dying over these ridiculous ditties, I will take "off your lock, and break the piano in such a man-"ner, that not all your ingenuity shall be able to "repair it."

The sight and reproaches of Justine roused Morland from the train into which he had fallen; for as he sung, Matilda fired his imagination, he thought he saw her, and the vision had produced those tender and pathetic tones so shocking to the ears of Mademoiselle Justine. He felt extremely awkward on coming to himself, made her sit down, and, to appease her anger, played several little light airs which he had learned of her, and with which he now put her into good humour.

CHAPTER IV.

While this was passing in the attics of Cray-hill mansion, jealousy was preparing for Morland adven-

tures more brilliant and more dangerous. Kitty, Matilda's maid, was Justine's rival. Smitten with Morland, she could not endure the Frenchwoman, and endeavoured to turn all she did into ridicule. "Do you know, Miss," said she, to her young lady, "that your Italian music-master's piano-forte has "been carried up to the top of the house? Made- "moiselle Justine has made a musician of Edward; "they are always playing concerts together."

"That can't be, Kitty," replied Matilda; "Jus- "tine knows nothing of music, and therefore can't "teach it."—"It's very true, Miss," returned Kitty, "that Justine knows nothing, but she pre- "tends she does, and Edward wastes his time in her "company."—"Have you heard him?" said Ma- tilda. "Oh, yes," replied she, "he makes noise "enough; but I suppose it is nothing but noise."— "I don't know;" said Matilda, "the young man "has a decent appearance, and seems to have re- "ceived an education superior to his situation: he "may know things that Justine may not be able to "teach him. At what time does he generally "play?"—"Morning and afternoon too," answer- ed Kitty; "indeed he always goes to it as soon as "ever his work is done; for I must do him the jus- "tice to say, that he never neglects that, and rather "does too much than too little: there's no fault to "find with him, but his listening to Justine; the "forward hussy will make a fool of him: she is con- "tinually besetting him, and I think him very much "altered already."—"Well, Kitty," said Matilda, "if you hear Edward playing to-morrow, and he is "alone, let me know; I should like to hear him. It "would be a prize for me indeed, if Signor Berto- "lini's piano were in a condition for me to practise "on."

Next day, between nine and ten o'clock in the

morning, Kitty gave her notice that Morland was at the instrument. All was quiet in the spacious mansion, Sir Robert was hunting, Justine attending her Lady's toilet, and Morland at his studies. Matilda stole softly from her room, and going up stairs, glided gently through the long passage that led to Morland's chamber. She stood listening at the door of it. She went up with an expectation of hearing something above the usual attainments of a servant, but was far from suspecting that he could sing and accompany himself. He happened by chance to be singing a favourite Italian air, which Matilda wished to have learned, but had despaired of accomplishing, ever since Signor Bertolini's departure. She had a great inclination to let Morland know that she was in the passage, and to desire him to open the door; but deeming it unbecoming her sex, age and rank, she went away undiscovered, her heart beating and more inclined to think of the young musician's talents than was suited to her repose. At dinner that day, she often fixed her eyes on him. She had before observed his figure, but had paid no attention to it. His features and the elegance of his person had struck her generally, but the countenance and perfect harmony of the *tout ensemble* had escaped her notice. She now perceived them, and for the first time sighed; but it was a sigh which arose from compassion and a very natural reflection: why were such endowments bestowed upon a man destined to languish all his life in a servile state!

Matilda's feelings were strongly painted in her looks. Morland's eyes met hers, and they made their way to his heart, where he felt an unaccountable agitation. The occupations of the day relieved him a little, but supper producing a scene perfectly similar to that at dinner, Morland, unable to eat, retired to his room, his heart full, and hardly able to draw

his breath. He went to bed, turned from side to side, never once forgot himself, and rose next morning much more tired than when he lay down.

Matilda's thoughts were no less occupied with the charming song she had heard. Her taste for music had but increased the more from the neglect of her parents in giving her opportunities to acquire it: but how was she to contrive to get the piano, and Morland's assistance? To employ Justine to effect it was beneath her, and if she were to apply to Lady Wallingford, she ran a risk of being forbade to think of it. She thought that she should succeed better and more easily through Sir Robert, who often urged her to sing. She had, in his opinion, the finest voice in England. Pretending to general taste, he often, to show his ear for music, whistled such parts of favourite tunes as he could catch, and he naturally though accidentally thrilled a few bars of the song that had made such an impression on Matilda. "There," said he to her, "there's a song for you! "If you but knew that, girl! It is delightful! Mrs. "Delaval thinks she sings it: poor thing!"

Matilda did not let slip the opportunity of informing her father, that it was in her power to learn it, if he would allow her, telling him that she had heard that Edward both played and sung it exquisitely. "What! Edward!" cried Sir Robert: "but I "should not be surprised at it, for Hedger, my hunts-"man, has improved so much on the French horn "since he has been in my service, that I should not "wonder if he was to be engaged at the opera "next winter. But has any body heard Edward "sing?"—"It was my maid Kitty that told me," replied Matilda.—"Oh!" cried the Baronet, "Kitty is a diletante."—"But really, Papa," said Matilda, "he accompanies himself on the piano-"forte, and has put that which belonged to Signor

" Bertolini into perfect order."—" Really! then he " must be a clever fellow."

The Baronet became impatient to hear this new disciple of Apollo; Morland was therefore ordered to leave what he was about, and see the piano brought down immediately. It was soon placed in a parlour that looked on the garden, and Morland was desired to play. Though, while at Oxford, he had played before some good judges, the consciousness of his present situation, with the curiosity, eagerness, and noisy spirit of Sir Robert, threw him into the greatest embarrassment. He was naturally timid, and knew too much of music not to be diffident of his execution. He sat down hardly knowing what he did, and perhaps would have been unable either to find a key or raise a single note, had not Matilda, with the voice of an angel, said, " Sing, " Edward." Influenced by an order that made its way to his heart, he obeyed.

At first his voice trembled, but by degrees he gained confidence, and charmed his hearers. Matilda was delighted, and her father hurraed so loudly, that his clamorous applause reached the apartment of Lady Wallingford, who sent to enquire the cause, and was informed of Morland's success. The heart of Justine, who, through a window, caught a sight of her idol on the garden terrace, was divided between anxiety and joy. Lady Wallingford coolly observed that Sir Robert made a wonder of every thing. He soon after joined her himself, and assured her that it was most extraordinary, and that she would be astonished and charmed; but her Ladyship sneered, and begged to postpone the second exhibition till the afternoon.

Not to dwell on slight circumstances, suffice it to say, that in the evening Morland sung, was afterwards permitted to accompany Matilda; and in a

short time Lady Wallingford, the Baronet, and the whole family became accustomed to the sight of the heiress of Cray-hill taking lessons from the Apollo in livery. The master, though not in the habit of teaching, had talent and taste, and was assiduous and extremely patient; the scholar's application was repaid with wonderful improvement, and every thing appeared to go on vastly well.

Justine was the only person dissatisfied. When she wished to give Miss Wallingford a French lesson, the young lady had not time to take it. Except in Lady Wallingford's apartment, in the passages, and at dinner, Justine now seldom saw Morland, who was permitted to go to the parlour where the piano stood, and where she sometimes went and leaned over his shoulders, though he paid her no attention; but one of the footmen passing the window surprised her in that attitude, and to escape being laughed at, she was forced to relinquish her station.

Being truly and deeply enamoured, her situation became insupportable. She was persuaded that Morland could not be made of marble, and she soon took it into her head, that his heart, insensible to her, had yielded to the charms of Matilda. She kept an eye upon them both, and soon convinced herself that she was not mistaken.

One day she determined, at any risk, to conceal herself behind a skreen that stood in the parlour, at a door which opened into another room. There she stood listening and peeping during the lesson Morland gave to Matilda. All that either of them said, referred to what they were employed about; but the sounds of the voices were so tender that the flats and sharps seemed to be making love. Then such complaisance, such interest, such fire in their looks, such gentle drawings of the breath, and occasional little

starts, were quite enough to banish all doubt from one so knowing.

Opening the door as if entering from the other room, she went forward pretending to look for something. The colour that already tinged the face of Morland became doubly deep: he was at first agitated, but soon recovered himself, and continued his instructions with as much ease as before, without caring whether Justine staid or not.

When the lesson was over, and Matilda gone, Mademoiselle Justine threw herself in Morland's way, who wished to avoid her: but she caught him by the skirt of the coat, and held him fast. "You "can't escape me," cried she, "I must speak to "you. Are you mad, Edward? What! have you "the assurance to look up to my young lady? You "are in love with her, ey? and she with you! If Sir "Robert and my Lady had but the slightest sus- "picion of it, what would become of you?"

Morland's astonishment will be easily imagined: he was guilty without knowing it, and too much confused by the accusation to reply immediately. "*I*," cried he, as soon as he could find words, "*I* "so lost to every sense of rectitude! *I* in love with "the daughter of one I serve! *she* cast a thought of "love upon a servant! It is you who are mad: how "dare you give birth to such a thought!"

"You don't mean it, perhaps," said Justine; "you don't know what you are about; you don't "know the state of your own mind. Quit your "scholar, or my friendship for you, and my duty to "Sir Robert and my Lady, will force me to do what "we may have to repent. Give over the farce you "are playing with me: I shall put all these ideas out "of your head. All this mischief, my good friend, "is owing to you."

"Mischief!" said Morland; "you are laughing

" at me: I have done no mischief, and know of " none. I am happy to give Miss Wallingford les- " sons in music, and she is very good in taking them. " It is with the approbation of Sir Robert and my " Lady——"—" But not with mine;" said Justine. " Once more, I don't choose that Miss Wallingford's " head should run upon a lackey, nor that that " lackey should be shot through the head or run " through the body." Here Justine, seeing Kitty at a distance looking at her, lowered her voice, and said in a whisper—" We are observed: I am oblig- " ed to leave you; but in the evening don't lock " yourself up; I have a great deal to say to you." On this they parted; he hastened to his room, and she anywhere to avoid the eyes of Kitty.

CHAPTER V.

It would be difficult to describe the emotions of Morland as he ascended the stairs, entered his room, and turned the key upon himself. He would fain have shut his eyes to the truth which Justine had presented to his view, but it had penetrated to his heart. He examined himself. The whole of his life previous to his seeing Matilda appeared to him little more than a state of non-existence, from which he had suddenly burst: and when he quitted her, he felt as if he were again returning to the same state. Always sensible of the greatest respect for her, he had indulged himself in the pleasure of looking at her, listening to her, and passing whole hours in thinking of her. " Heavens!" thought he, " is it " possible that Justine can be right? am I so " wretched, so guilty as to be in love! I am ruined

" and undone. Reduced by a sad fate to the lowest " condition, my heart overcharged with a passion " injurious to those by whom I live, condemned to " the most dreadful self-denial or to guilt, death is " my only resource, and death will I seek. Miss " Wallingford love me! impossible. Born to af- " fluence, and entitled to a match among families of " rank and fortune, she may have been led by the " goodness of her heart to look with kindness on an " unfortunate fellow appearing to her not unworthy " of it—but as to love!—love!—me! I were mad to " think it."

Such were the reflections of poor Morland, when Justine, stealing softly through the twilight, tapped gently at his door, and interrupted them. He suffered her, however, to tap in vain, he said he was not well and had gone to bed: an information that precluded her seeing him then, and she went away convulsed with rage.

He passed the night in great agitation, and next day went to his work with an altered aspect, looking like one that had just risen from a fit of sickness. At the usual hour for giving Matilda her lesson he went to his own room. Lady Wallingford, who had accidentally risen that morning earlier than usual, went down to the parlour, where finding her daughter alone at the piano, she asked where her teacher was. " He has something to do, I suppose," said Matilda, " that keeps him, for he is very punctual." Kitty happening to be in the way, was ordered by Lady Wallingford to go and send him; a commission the little damsel undertook with much pleasure, as she had perceived that this musical tuition was not relished by Justine.

While Kitty was gone, Lady Wallingford, who had no real taste for music, left her daughter, and soon after returned to her own apartment. Mor-

land, obeying her Ladyship's orders, entered the parlour trembling, and found Matilda alone. He attempted to direct her in a cramp passage of her accompaniment, but his hands shook over the keys, and could not give effect to the notes. "What's the matter, Edward?" said the lovely girl in a tone that might have moved the heart of a stoic; —"has any thing happened to you? Are you ill?" —"No, Madam:" was all he could answer; nor could he recover himself. "Perhaps," continued Matilda, "something has been done to vex you: I "should be sorry for it, for I don't think you de- "serve it."—"Indeed, Madam," replied Morland, "you are mistaken, for I am treated with more kind- "ness than I merit; but I had a very bad night." —"Perhaps you don't lie comfortably," said she, "I'll speak to mamma about it."—"I assure you, "Madam," cried Morland, "that I am very well "off in every respect."—"That's your modesty, "Edward," replied she: "I see your merit, and "so do papa and mamma."

Poor Morland was extremely perplexed, and to relieve himself from his embarrassment, proposed that she should sing. "With all my heart," said she, "let us begin with the duet you brought me yes- "terday; I think I have made myself mistress of it; "it is charming."

Morland began the accompaniment with an unsteady finger, and Matilda sang the air.

No longer doubt: these tell-tale eyes
Too plainly show you how I love——

Her part set out with these lines, the sense of which was kept up through the song. Morland's part expressed extreme agitation. Both were executed with so much truth and nature, that the *duo* had like

to have ended very tragically. Matilda giving the words uncommon expression by the united aid of her look and voice, Morland suddenly remembered what Justine had said, and thought he perceived the truth of her remark in the beautiful eyes that were riveted on him. Involuntary joy, remorse, anxiety, sorrow seized his heart: unable to bear the clashing and excess of so many contending passions, his head grew giddy, and his heart failed him; trying to push his chair back in order to rise and fly, he fell senseless at the feet of Matilda. The amiable girl, alarmed and greatly affected, called for help, and Morland being carried into the air, soon came to himself, but continued so ill that he was assisted to his chamber.

An account of the accident presently reached the ears of Justine, who was dressing Lady Wallingford. Her sensations may be easily imagined. Her haste to be gone cost her Lady more than one hair, and as soon as she had done she flew to Morland's bedside; for he had not now locked his door. "What has been the matter with you, Edward?" cried she, out of breath.—"Nothing, Mademoi-"selle!" replied he, angrily and vexed, "you "made me extremely unhappy yesterday; I have "neither eat nor slept since, and being very weak, I "fainted."—"Nothing more than that?" said she; "Do you hide nothing from me? Yes, you do; and "you are wrong. On whom can you rely more se-"curely than on me? You well know what passes "in my heart. Yes, ungrateful youth! you know "that I adore you, that I can conceive no happiness "equal to that of passing my life with you."

"For Heaven's sake," cried Morland, confounded at this abrupt and indelicate confession, which he was sure no Englishwoman would ever have condescended to make; "For Heaven's sake! have more

" respect for yourself, and desist from tormenting " me. I thank you for your regard, and I shall al- " ways wish you well. I should deceive you were I " to say more. I should be sorry to think your hap- " piness depended on your passing your life with " me. We are by no means made for each other."

" *Petit Monstre !*" cried Justine, in the bitterness of her heart; " I know the reason of your despising " me. You may pretend to hide it if you will: but " you think a Frenchwoman unworthy an English- " man's heart. You don't even think it worth your " while to keep up the slightest appearance with " me: you not only dislike my person, but you tell " me so; your vanity won't suffer you to let me " doubt it. *Eh bien!* I tell you again, unprincipled " man, you are abusing the roof that shelters you— " you have the impudence to love Miss Walling- " ford, and have been villain enough to make her " love you."—" Confound your insolence !" cried Morland, in a tremendous voice, " that dares to ut- " ter a blasphemy against the virtues of one I so " highly respect, and who should also be respected " by you. Leave my room this instant, and never " more mention the horrors that have entered your " imagination, or I'll make you repent it."

No man on earth was of a milder disposition than Morland. He had never before felt such an excess of rage, but the soul that is shaken by one powerful passion is always open to the attack of others, and is liable to be hurried into excesses. Edward appeared no longer charming, but terrible; Justine, terrified, flew out of the chamber, pulling the door after her, and retreated with a heart racked by spite and jealousy.

Morland's passion gave him new strength, and he got up; for, on reflection, he feared that his absenting himself might occasion conjectures injurious to

Matilda, and warrant Justine's audacious suspicions. He was no longer a stranger to the passion which the lovely heiress of Cray-hill had inspired him with. Perhaps she returned it. He was painfully sensible how dangerous the situation was to both of them. He resolved to leave Devonshire, and never more return to it: but it was necessary to execute his resolution in such a manner as to give no grounds for suspicion. He determined, therefore, to write a letter as from a friend in London, feigning some pretence by which it should appear that he had no alternative but that of leaving Cray-hill. This letter, addressed to himself, he meant to carry to Exeter, and leave at the post-office, whence it would be brought by Sir Robert's messenger on the next post-day. The design was worthy the rectitude of his heart, but he was destined by fortune to give occasion to two incidents at Cray-hill, which involved him in adventures much more extraordinary.

Having left his room, he went down to dinner, eat moderately, and went about his work with an activity and apparent cheerfulness that removed all apprehensions in those who felt interested about him as to his health. He was through the day uncommonly assiduous. There was at this time a great deal of company in the house. Sir Robert had been out shooting, and returned late with his friends. Morland, though it was not his place, went out with some others to receive them, and taking the Baronet's horse, was leading it to the stable, when a gun went off in the hands of a servant at a little distance from him: being pointed towards Morland, some of the shot struck him. In a moment his cheek, neck, shirt, and the cape and sleeve of his coat, were covered with blood. The report of the gun was heard by every body in the house. All ran to the side whence it came, the ladies appearing at

the windows. Matilda gave a sudden scream, crying, "Heavens! Edward is killed," and sinking into a chair, fainted. Some were running one way to assist in bringing her to herself, some another to help Morland, who, notwithstanding appearances, escaped with very little hurt. Several of the shot passed close to his face, and one of them tore the end of his ear; the wound, though slight, discharged abundance of blood which his hand helped to spread. It was soon stopped by a basin of cold water and a bandage. Matilda, coming to herself, as soon recovered her tranquillity on hearing the extent of the mischief, and the company resumed their gaiety.

However important in their own eyes, or in those of one another, there were but two of the guests at Cray-hill of any importance to Morland's history. These were Mrs. Johnson, Sir Robert's sister, the widow of a gentleman of the county of Sussex, and Lord Chatterton, the Duke of Surry's eldest son, both of whom arrived that very morning; on what account will be seen hereafter. Mrs. Johnson was a woman of a confined understanding, but of an excellent disposition, and exemplary conduct. She had no children of her own, and considered Matilda as her heir.

Lord Chatterton, who was six and twenty, had travelled and seen the world. His person, to a discerning eye, discovered the fatigues he had undergone, and the amusements he had indulged in; but it had something noble and dignified. He had an easy and modest air, but nothing of bashfulness: he possessed the art of eluding questions, and terminating disputes with a jest. He had some general idea of every thing, but knew nothing thoroughly: his phraseology was the cant of fashionable people, consisting in saying things agreeably without submitting

to the usage of acknowledged terms: his politeness was never remitted, but it was sometimes lofty, and sometimes cold. Such was his Lordship, and being a man of distinguished rank, he was overwhelmed with civilities by the master of the house, who in every thing consulted his pleasure. The morning sport had been concerted for his amusement, and in the evening he was to have been treated with music. Sir Robert, unwilling that the merit of his gallant design should be entirely lost, could not refrain from speaking of it to his Lordship. "The going off of "that gun, my Lord," said he, "has prevented an "agreeable surprise I intended for you. The lad "who is wounded and so besmeared with blood, "plays divinely on the piano. I meant to have "treated you with some charming airs sung by Ma- "tilda, accompanied by him; but we must defer it "till to-morrow, as he is not in a condition to ap- "pear."

Lord Chatterton replied to Sir Robert only by an inclination of the head, but turning to Lady Wallingford, as the Baronet spoke to a lady near him, said to her:—"Does your Ladyship understand what "Sir Robert says? Treat me with music, in which "his daughter is to be accompanied by a footman! "I wonder that you, who know so much of the "world, do not inform him that such things are not "done. At home, quite alone, one may sometimes "make use of the talents of these sort of peo- "ple, but—"—Her Ladyship replied, with a shrug of the shoulders, "what can I say to you, my Lord? "You know Sir Robert." And here the conversation changed.

Justine was extremely alarmed at the accident that had befallen Morland, and had flown to his assistance; but he preferred the attentions of Kitty, and repulsed the French damsel with some disdain.

The former having lightly tied up his head, he went to his room, leaving Mademoiselle enraged at his conduct.

He did not make his appearance all the next day. His mind was fully employed with his design of leaving Cray-hill; of the necessity for which he was the more convinced after hearing from Kitty of Matilda's fainting. Justine, finding he did not come down, went up stairs, and loaded him with reproaches, part of which she discharged at him in his chamber, and the rest through the key-hole, for he had put her out without any ceremony. In the latter position she continued to thunder, prevented by passion and the sound of her own voice from hearing the foot-step of Kitty, who was going, by Matilda's desire, to ask how Morland was; and who, waiting to be noticed by her rival, made her a sarcastical curtsey. Uncontrollable fury now raged in Justine's bosom, and she determined to be revenged.

The following day, Morland having put a bit of sticking plaster on his ear, returned to his attendance in Lady Wallingford's apartments. Kitty immediately carried the tidings to Matilda, who had just been hearing news much less agreeable to her. She desired Kitty to go and tell him that she was going to the piano, and that she wished, if he were not employed, that he would come to her. Morland received the orders, and could not disobey. He found Matilda in tears, and approached her with consternation, without the power of opening his lips. "Edward," said she to him, endeavouring to recover herself, "I shall take no more lessons from you; I "am going to leave Cray-hill. Lord Chatterton has "asked my hand of Sir Robert, who has desired me "to accept his Lordship. The whole matter is to "be arranged in a short time. Fare you well, Edward—I shall the more easily endure the change

" I am going to make, if it enables me to be of ser-
" vice to you—I wish it very much—I will, if it is
" ever in my power. Don't forget me—"

Matilda felt her tears flowing again, and she saw that Morland also wept bitterly. " Don't weep so," said she, " you make me unhappy—Good by." Morland, distracted, fell upon his knee, and kissed the hand she held out to him. At that instant Sir Robert, furious, with a drawn sword in his hand, rushed into the parlour, and made towards the youth. Passion sees nothing in its way; so, fortunately, the Baronet ran violently against a chair, and tumbled over it. Morland, in spite of the agitation into which the interview with Matilda had thrown him, impelled by instinct to avoid the sword of the furious Baronet, leaped into the garden, through a window that stood open.

Sir Robert bellowed, foamed, ran into the hall, calling his servants and those of his guests. " Get
" guns—run—seize him—stop him—villain!—I'll
" have him hanged."

All the servants assembled round him—Matilda was found lying on the ground in a swoon. The Baronet was asked of whom he complained, who was to be seized?—" Edward," cried he, " that villain
" Edward. He is in the garden—come along—
" come along." Saying which Sir Robert ran out himself, followed by the people whom he had collected, to go in pursuit of Morland. Meanwhile Matilda was carried to her chamber by Justine and Kitty.

CHAPTER VI.

At the time that the woful incident recorded in the last chapter took place, Lord Chatterton was engaged in conversation with Lady Wallingford in her Ladyship's apartment. Astonished at the uproar which was heard all over the house, they went to inquire the cause of it. Her Ladyship's people, without hesitation, told her all: and my Lord's valet-de-chambre kept nothing from him. The effect of such a catastrophe on a man like Lord Chatterton, who, though disposed to marry for fortune, had a high idea of the honour he was conferring, may be easily imagined. He ordered his carriage, and before Sir Robert returned from his pursuit, took an abrupt leave of Lady Wallingford, requesting her to assure his friend the Baronet, that an indispensable duty obliged him to leave Cray-hill.

Her Ladyship was not merely informed of the simple event as it occurred, but heard it embellished with circumstances which Sir Robert's fury, Morland's flight, and Matilda's ambiguous situation, generated in the brain of each relater. A disposition like Lady Wallingford's, trivial and selfish, was not easily moved: but the present event was of such a nature—reputation irrecoverably gone, her only daughter, herself exposed to the censures of the world, already sufficiently inclined to carp at her, and above all, the loss of the honour she had so set her mind upon, that of being the mother of a Duchess. Enraged and disappointed, she hastened to Matilda's room to question her on all the particulars, and to overwhelm her with reproach; but the unfortunate girl was not in a state either to satisfy her curiosity,

or to near her invectives. Extremely affected, extremely terrified, she had recovered from one fainting fit only to sink into another; and her mother found her in the arms of her aunt, the worthy Mrs. Johnson, who was endeavouring to bring her to herself. Meanwhile the Baronet hunted his prey in the garden, the pleasure-grounds, and park, and failing to find him ordered horses to beat over the country.

He had, with imprudent security, shut his eyes to the long tête-à-têtes of his daughter with a handsome and engaging youth: however, as the alliance with Lord Chatterton had been determined upon, Matilda, conscious that the ardour which had imperceptibly crept into her heart was inconsistent with the just dictates of pride and reason, would have endeavoured to forget Morland; but fate and jealous fury suddenly gave a different direction to every thing. When Kitty, in obedience to Matilda, went to call Morland, Mademoiselle Justine went for the Baronet, and telling him all she knew, and all she supposed, led him to the spot where his daughter and the unhappy youth, obeying the dictates of reason and honour, had met for the last time. Sir Robert, who had snatched up a sword in a room, in his way to the parlour, entered at the moment that Morland was kissing the hand of Matilda as she bade him farewell. Conceiving more than he saw, more than he had heard, the Baronet became mad with rage, and lost himself in furious absurdities.

Justine had her revenge, but the woful satisfaction was dearly purchased, being followed by remorse and fear. Her heart was not a bad one; and it told her that she had dishonoured her young mistress: she loved Morland, and dreaded his being overtaken.

While these passions agitated the inhabitants of Cray-hill, Morland was running as fast as his feet could carry him, without knowing whither. From

the garden he had made his way into the park, and several times leaped a brook of considerable breadth, whose unseasonable meandering greatly impeded his flight. Coming to the wooden paling that enclosed the park he climbed over it, and found himself in a country covered with underwood, which entangled his feet, and obliged him to slacken his pace; but at the same time, by concealing him, rendered his retreat more secure. He went forward three miles in this manner, without following any beaten track, till having been long out of sight of Cray-hill, he took a small path, which led him farther and farther from Sir Robert's pursuit.

He walked easily, being light; but his strength not being equal to the fatigue he had undergone, he was often obliged to stop and take breath. He left Cray-hill at eleven o'clock in the morning, and at six in the evening had scarcely proceeded twelve miles. Seeing a small, retired farm-house, he went up to the door, dying with fatigue and thirst. It was occupied by an old widow woman, who had several children grown up, with whose assistance she managed the farm. Her name was Shipley. She received Morland hospitably, and offered him all the refreshments the house afforded. He eat but little, and begged to lie down. Dame Shipley showed him to a bed, and observing how flushed he was, felt his hand, and found that he was in a high fever. She was too good to turn a fellow-creature out in that condition, and therefore advised him to undress himself, and go into the bed. He thanked her and took her advice. He had but a single guinea in his pocket: the rest of his money being in his trunk, with his clothes and other things, at Cray-hill. The good dame, under whose roof he was, got him some barley-water, and took all the care she could of him: but, poor fellow! he stood also in need of other assistance than what his fever

required. His mind was suffering still more than his body. Wretched on Matilda's account; apprehensive for himself, knowing he was pursued; shame and irretrievable ruin haunted his imagination. He had behaved ill to those whom he was bound to respect: the curate of Reading, the vicar of Holcomb, all nature would rise against him. How could he escape? The only coat he had, was the livery of a man bent on his destruction. All his resources, all that he had in the world, remained in a place whence it appeared to him impossible ever to get them. The thought of Matilda, whom he adored, whom he had been the means of rendering wretched, and from whom he was for ever parted, added to the horrors of his imagination.

The fever continued on him three days without intermission, during which dame Shipley and her family attended him with every tenderness and care. On the fourth, his pulse sunk, he fell into a sound sleep, and, after a profuse sweat, the fever left him entirely.

Though weak, he determined to get up. Being dressed, he went into the room that served the family for kitchen, for parlour, and hall. Sitting with his elbows on a table, his head supported by his hands, he fell into a melancholy reverie, from which he was roused by bursts of laughter, and the voices of people talking near the door.

It seems that one of those women called gypsies had taken hold of the hand of Polly, one of dame Shipley's daughters, about eighteen years old, and was predicting for her a speedy marriage, a good income, a numerous and beautiful family, long life, health, joy, and every kind of happiness. The girl could not contain herself, enchanted with so delightful a prospect, and to complete it, the prophetess went on heightening her predictions with circumstances more and more agreeable. Polly now came in to tell

her mother her good fortune, the gypsy following, in hopes, no doubt, of being rewarded with some bread and cheese and a draught of beer, for her skill and agreeable foresight. She was a woman much above the common stature, her skin was tanned, her eye quick and beautiful; she had prominent features, and a prepossessing countenance. Morland was struck with it, and he woke from his reverie to contemplate her. She, on her part, gazed for some time at him, without saying a word, with a look full of concern. At length she went up to him, and said: "Oho! "young man! what are you doing here?"

At this question, Morland, anxious to be concealed, thought that he was known; and reddening, asked the woman, with an uneasy look, if she knew him.

"Perhaps I do," replied she; "my business is to "know people, and sometimes better than they know "themselves. But don't be afraid, I never betray "any body, particularly amiable young folks; on the "contrary I am always ready to serve them."

Morland now drew her aside, and asked her if she really knew him. "Or I am no witch," replied the gypsy. "If you are only a witch," said Morland, "I have no occasion to be uneasy at any knowledge "you have."

"Oh, you cruel creature!" said the gypsy; "and "so you hold my art in great contempt! you learned "that at Oxford."

"Oxford!" exclaimed Morland: "what about "Oxford? you have been told, I suppose, by the "vicar of Holcomb—"

"I have been told nothing;" said the cunning woman. "Be less hard of belief, more complying, "and we shall both of us soon know more than the "vicar of Holcomb, the curate of Reading, and all "the clergy of England together could tell us." She then asked him to go out of the house, and Morland,

influenced by curiosity, consenting, she took him to a beautiful spreading beech growing at a little distance from the door, and making him sit down with her under it, desired him to give her his hand. "My hand! and what will you read there?" said he, testily, still suspecting that the woman had by some means obtained the knowledge of a few circumstances respecting him, by practising on the vicar of Holcomb, and that she knew Sir Robert Wallingford's livery; it being the business of these wandering people to pick up knowledge of every body in their passage from place to place.

"What will I read?" replied the gypsy; "this "hand, those eyes, and that forehead, are an excel-"lent book."

Morland, shrugging his shoulders, said; "you may, "in some way unknown to me, have learned a few "particulars, with which you make a parade; but "as to your art, good woman, it cannot impose "on me."

"Oho!" cried the gypsy, "I find I have to do with a "philosopher of eighteen in a livery! this would sur-"prise me if I were less used to prodigies. Look me "full in the face, and attend to what I say. I foretel "that you will presently have more confidence in me "than I desire, and will ask me more than my art, "however far it goes, will allow me to communicate. "Come, tell me your name, your age———"

"Not a word will you get from me, Mrs. Pro-"phetess," said Morland, interrupting her: "divi-"nation is your business; pray begin with these little "circumstances you desire to know: it will be but a "slight proof of your art."

"How obstinate!" cried the modern Pythia: "to others this would be very disgusting; but we "have books, and by diligent search can find secrets "of a much higher nature." Saying this, she took

out of her pocket a little book, about the size and shape of an almanack, turned over the leaves, and mumbled something to herself, then assuming a decided tone, read aloud: *Edward Morland, born in London, nineteen years ago, last Easter-day.* Here she stopped, shut the book, and taking Morland by the hand, said; "Well, my young friend, you see "that we have means of obtaining the information "that is refused us."

This proof of an art which he had so thoroughly despised had an effect of such importance on Morland's mind, and was followed by such extraordinary consequences, that they deserve a new chapter, and the reader is requested to pause, and, before he proceeds, to dismiss from his mind all incredulity, and snarling criticism.

CHAPTER VII.

MORLAND had carefully concealed his name ever since he came into Devonshire, where it was known to no creature but the vicar of Holcomb, who had winked at his taking another. Not only was his own name mentioned by this wandering interpretess of fortune, he was told circumstances that he had learned while he was a child at Reading, from Mrs. Waller, his benefactress, and which he had almost forgotten. A cold sweat broke out all over him from head to foot. His understanding was staggered, and from an utter contempt of divination and sorcery, he yielded his reason to the conviction of his senses, was bewildered, terrified, and converted.

The gypsy kept her eyes upon him, and saw what was passing in his mind. "Come, come, young

" man," said she, " though I astonish you a little, " you have no occasion to be frightened. You can " be in no danger from me. The sight of you gave " me unusual pleasure, I feel an uncommon interest " in all that concerns you; give yourself up to me, " and I engage to effect in time for you a happiness " beyond your hopes."

" Give myself up to you!" cried Morland, staring at her with a degree of terrour; till softening, as he gazed, he added: " Alas! while I look at you, I feel " myself but too much inclined to do as you desire. " There is a certain something in your countenance " that goes to my heart; but your profession, so justly " decried, I always reprobated; and now that you " have so staggered me I am terrified at it. Should " I give myself up to your direction—"

" My dear boy," said the gypsy, looking at him affectionately, and speaking to him with a voice full of sweetness, " banish from your mind distrust and " fear. Could I have the heart to deceive you! You " are young, unhappy, forsaken, if I may so say, by all " nature. What view could I have? And if I make " use of my art only to discover your wants and your " weakness, in order to assist and protect you; if " I assure you that my advice shall ever be consist- " ent with the strictest rules of morality, and guide " you only to the path of virtue and true happiness, " how can you refuse to follow it, and attach your- " self to me?"

Morland turned his eyes with astonishment on the gypsy, who kept hers calmly fixed on him. An air of candour, and even of dignity, appeared in her countenance, and distinguished her address in spite of the motley and tattered garments that disfigured her. He remained silent, nor did she interrupt his thoughts for a few minutes, when, perceiving by his looks that he wavered, she continued thus: " The moments

" are precious: either my art deceives me, or your " breast is torn by a variety of passions which require " to be moderated. You are uneasy as to your cha- " racter, nay, as to your life, and not for yourself " alone—"

" Oh!" cried Morland, " whoever you are, mor- " tal, angel, or propitious demon! who are come to " my assistance in this lonely place, tell me, I beseech " you, as nothing escapes your knowledge, tell me " who I am, whither I am to go, and how I am to get " away from a place where ruin threatens me: how " I am to escape from my own reflections. I hate, de- " test, abhor myself."—" Restrain these violent fits," replied the gypsy; " they proceed from a despair " neither rational nor well-founded: and pray put " some limit to your desire of information. I told " you how it would be: a little while ago you did " not want to learn any thing from me; now, you " want to know every thing, and even such things " as it would be dangerous to tell you before the " proper time. One truth I will tell you; you are " not what you appear to be; more I am not per- " mitted to say. Unhappy youth! degraded by the " fault of your parents, merit by resignation, gentle- " ness, and patience, restoration to a better lot. Till " then seek to know no more, but leave to me the " direction of your conduct; I exact implicit obedi- " ence. Sir Robert Wallingford, tired of his fruit- " less pursuit, has given it up, his servants are all " gone back to the house, and you shall be enabled, " by means of a disguise, to pass through the coun- " try undiscovered. Under whatever form I may " appear to you, do not be surprised; not any of " them will be natural to me, but all will tend to your " ease, safety and happiness, which are become the " dearest objects of my heart."

Nothing could equal the surprise and agitation of

poor Morland's mind. The prodigious intelligence of the gypsy, which he no longer doubted, her commanding figure and language, and the flattery of her promises, might have staggered him without deserving his confidence, had not her affectionate look and manner combined with his own deserted state to affect his heart. While all the world forsook him she consoled him, and talked to him of hope. A degree of respect mingled with fear, he suffered himself to be guided by her, and shed a flood of tears upon her hand.

"I have conquered, Morland!" said she, "and "for the future you are mine. Cheer up, my son: "by that tender name let me henceforth call you." —"Alas!" replied he, "never before have I re- "ceived it."—"I know it well," replied the gypsy, "you have been deprived of much comfort, and I "wish to make you amends; but you must open your "heart to me with all the confidence due to one who "has a right to so tender a connexion. Have you "forgotten Matilda?"

"Heavens!" exclaimed Morland, "you stab me "to the heart. Forget Matilda! never. The re- "membrance of her goodness, so ill requited, and of "the kindness of her parents, whose esteem and af- "fection I have probably been the means of her los- "ing, will make me wretched as long as I live. My "heart I assure you was innocent; at least I thought "so. I refused, indeed, to be undeceived when an "attempt was made to open my eyes, and I was, with- "out knowing it, guilty of the greatest ingratitude: "but it had nearly cost me my life."—"You were "very imprudent, my son," replied the gypsy, "but "Sir Robert and his Lady were much more so."

"I am rightly punished," cried Morland: "I "have injured Matilda—never can I see her again, "and to live without that hope is worse than death."

" My son," said the gypsy, " you must not give " way to such melancholy ideas. It is no doubt very " unfortunate to have been surprised into a passion " so ardent for a Lady whose situation in life appears " to be so disproportioned to yours, but do not de- " spair: consider the vicissitudes of fortune."

" Oh Heaven!" cried Morland, " for ever shower " your blessings on the lovely Matilda! and never " suffer her to fall so low as to hear without blush- " ing that I could aspire to her hand!"

" That's a noble sentiment, my son," replied his consoler, " and renders you worthy of a better fate. " I do not advise you to cherish a too flattering hope; " but conduct yourself prudently, and it may so turn " out that Matilda may bestow her hand upon you, " without degrading herself in her own eyes or " yours."

" Matilda ever become my wife!" cried he, convulsed with rapture. " You bid me hope it!"

" I bid you," replied the gypsy, " restrain these " transports, and not encourage mad expectations. " On the other hand, I give you leave to think that " prudence, with the assistance of Heaven, may bring " about happy changes in your favour: but discreet " and obedient you must be. Commit yourself en- " tirely to my direction, and begin by making a " change in your dress. That which you have on " could not fail to betray you. Let us now go back " to the house, and I will furnish you with a disguise " that shall completely conceal you."

Morland, at the gypsy's desire, showed her to the little room where he had slept, and where she directed him to wait till she returned. In about twenty minutes she went back to him with an arm full of women's clothes, plain, but very neat, which she had prevailed on dame Shipley to sell, and persuading Morland of the necessity for the change, helped him

to put them on. When completely metamorphosed, she made him sit down, and thus addressed him:

"Attend, my son, to what I am going to say. I am "using an innocent stratagem, of the utility of which "you will one day be sensible. For the present, be- "ware of belieing me either by your words or actions. "Widow Shipley and her family are firmly persuad- "ed by what I have said to them, that you are the "*daughter* of a Kentish gentleman of the name of "Forrester. Your name is Arabella. They believe "that your father resolved to marry you to a man "much older than yourself, and that you eloped to "avoid the match; that your family have people "looking for you in every part of England; that your "father, forgiving your error, is ready to receive "you with open arms; that after searching for you "for three months past, he discovered that you were "living at a gentleman's seat in this county; and "that he is now within ten miles of this place. I "pretend that I am going to inform him where you "are; you may expect him the day after to-morrow, "and you must be ready to receive him. So for the "present, good bye, my dear Miss Arabella For- "rester; it shall not be long before you see me "again."

As soon as the gypsy was gone, Polly and her mother went to the supposed young Lady, and begged her to make herself easy, as every thing went right, and her father, who was coming for her, had got the better of his anger. They then pressed her to eat something, saying that she had eat nothing for three days, which was very wrong. "La, Miss," cried Polly, "we suspected the truth from the first; you have such "a delicate look and soft voice, and the livery fitted "you so ill: why, la! it was very easy to see your "shape in it."

These remarks perplexed poor Morland. He had a soul superior to falsehood, he was apt to blush, and by preserving silence he played his part very naturally. While he was dressed as a man, the women had been on the reserve, but now their civilities were bestowed with more freedom, and their attentions made it a little difficult to sustain his character; however, that evening and the next day passed without his betraying himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

Soon after day-break on the morning appointed for the departure of the pretended Arabella, two men came to the farm-house: they rode, and brought a led horse properly accoutred with a side-saddle. The good people were up, and Miss Forrester prepared for any adventure.

The horsemen alighted, and one of them, speaking to Polly's brother, asked if Miss Forrester was not in the house. The supposed young lady immediately made her appearance, and the best dressed of the horsemen, whose face was almost covered with the cape of his great coat, flew to embrace her; after which the other horseman brought up the led horse and assisted her to mount, while the father of the young lady gave some money to the good people at the farm, and thanked them warmly for the care they had taken of his daughter. All this was quickly dispatched, and the travellers set out on their journey.

Morland, in his disguise, rode on with his unknown conductors, who, he did not doubt, had been sent for him by the gypsy. Yet as he proceeded, he could not help reflecting on his extraordinary state, and

perplexing himself with questions on the nature of the being who had thus volunteered her assistance, and from whom he was receiving services. His education had set fortune-telling, magic, and all pretended arts of that kind in their proper light in his mind. He had been convinced that all conjurors and magicians were rogues. Besides, even supposing the illusions that astonished him were supernatural; whence the powers by which they were effected? Could he answer it to his conscience to accept assistance, the source of which was unknown and suspicious? On the other hand, would a corrupt and evil spirit talk of morality, and engage to lead him into the path of honour and virtue? As these contradictory ideas floated in his mind, many notions he had met with in the works of Plato and Apuleius, which he had read at Oxford, mixed along with them: he remembered the demon of Socrates; and even resorted to higher authority, not only for the possibility, but for the certainty of supernatural interferences. Still he argued that they had long ceased to be admitted among human affairs; and that no particular person could be the object of them. From this argument he turned to the contemplation of the system of *universal immaterialism*. All things, according to the most learned and most virtuous* Bishop of Cloyne, were but conceptions of the soul; the most impenetrable substance was but an idea; solidity, extension, weight, were ideas; forms and sounds, events and actions, even pleasure and pain, were all the results of the exquisitely subtile operation of spirit. Does not the madman's imagination present realities as strongly to him as the senses of one called rational to his mind? "Good Heavens!" thought Morland, "I may be only moving from one

* To Berkeley every virtue under Heaven.
POPE.

"state of reality to another: I am surely losing the "regular traces of former existence, and commen- "cing the train of a new series of conceptions. Alas! "I am going mad." This idea took strong hold of his mind; he suspected that his intellect wavered, and he resolved, in submitting to his fate, to conceal his opinion. He was not, however, so fully convinced that he was mad, but that he determined to examine very strictly the advice that might be given to him, and the transactions in which he might be involved, in order to ascertain the principles of them.

In about three hours the travellers arrived at Honiton, and stopped at an inn. The horseman, who appeared to be the master, alighted, and without waiting, walked into the house: the other staid to assist the pretended young lady to dismount. She was shown into a parlour, and left by herself.

Looking out of the window, Morland saw a lad sitting on a bench, crying, and bewailing himself in the most piteous manner: but our unhappy youth was too much engaged with his own misfortunes to attend to those of others. Having been put into the parlour by mistake, he was not there many minutes when a chambermaid came for him, saying; "Will "you follow me, Miss? Your papa is waiting for you "up stairs in the room he has engaged." He followed the maid, who conducted him to a drawing-room, and left him at the door. Entering the room he found a man of a slender person, middle-sized, and well made. His countenance was noble and prepossessing, his carriage easy and gentlemanlike: he appeared to be about forty years old. He accosted Morland familiarly, and with a smile, saying; "Well, my dear girl, are you tired?"

Extremely embarrassed by this behaviour in a person entirely unknown to him, Morland received his attentions with surprise and coldness, and looked at

him from head to foot without recollecting ever to have seen him. "So, you don't remember my "face," said the gentleman, laughing at his embarrassment, "and yet, my dear girl, I have taken one "not absolutely unknown to you. The day before "yesterday you were a boy, your name Edward, and "I was your mother; this morning you were the "daughter of Mr. Forrester, of Kent, and I was "your father; but I am no longer an awkward coun- "try squire, I am Captain Godfrey, an officer in a "regiment going to be disbanded, and you are my "daughter. Come," continued he, gaily, "you are "now Emma Godfrey, and I hope you will convince "me that she is worthy of a father who has served "his country with reputation, and whom the go- "vernment is going to reward—by placing him on "the half-pay list."

"Alas!" replied Morland, "*you* are what you "please to be; pray, tell me what *I* am to be. I am "still, as it pleases you, a woman in appearance, but "I trust that I am not really to be metamorphosed."

The Captain smiled at this apprehension. "The "part of a handsome young woman is not to be scoffed "at," replied he; "but I shall not take upon me to "direct your taste in that particular. Your interest "requires this diguise for a time; take care you do "nothing inconsistent with your character, and par- "ticularly beware when among females only, of say- "ing or doing the least thing that can betray you: "if you ever happen to forget yourself, I am re- "vengeful, and will not answer for the conse- "quences."

This threat, which was uttered in a serious tone, made Morland thoughtful; the inconvenience of his female attire seemed to be increased, and he expressed a hope that he should not be long confined to it.

"Yes," replied Captain Godfrey, "you will have "time to be used to it. I don't even know whether "you will continue an Englishwoman or not, for it "does not suit your interest, or my views—you shall "be a Welchwoman."

"A Welchwoman!" exclaimed Morland, "im- "possible. I can neither be Welch woman nor "Welch man; I never was in Wales, and know no- "thing of the jargon of it."

"Every thing in this world," replied the Captain, "exists but in appearance. I, who am speaking to "you, am not myself, but another, and one day you "shall know me. You are neither Emma Godfrey nor "a Welch girl, yet you shall appear to be both; but "it is not necessary to employ the marvellous in every "thing. We are going to set off for Wales, where "I shall place you in a good house, and when you "are sufficiently instructed, I will produce you, "where I foresee the successful result of my ope- "rations."

Morland, whose mind was distracted by all this mysterious language, remained silent, with astonish- ment and perplexity marked on his face. "Poor "child!" cried the Captain, "quite lost in thought! "I must speak to him of Matilda."

"Matilda!" exclaimed Morland, eagerly, "can "you tell me any thing of Matilda?"—"She has "not forgotten you;" replied the Captain. "She "is unhappy, then?" said Morland. "She has re- "ceived some slight consolation," answered Captain Godfrey: "You may imagine the reproaches she "had to endure; but her aunt Mrs. Johnson, that "worthy indulgent woman, took her part. When "Sir Robert, calling her a mean-spirited wretch, "said he would turn her out of his house, Mrs. "Johnson declared she would receive her into hers;

" and when the Baronet added that he would disin-
" herit her, her aunt vowed she would give her every
" thing she had in the world. Lady Wallingford
" was not less severe than Sir Robert, and lavished
" every epithet of disgust upon her, concluding with
" saying that she should never be able to bear the
" sight of her. In short, the abuse of the daughter
" and the anger of the aunt ran so high, that Mrs.
" Johnson resolved to take her away with her imme-
" diately, if she could remove her without any risk."

" And is she ill then?" cried Morland, agitated.
" All is quiet again," replied the Captain, " and she
" is better. She is to accompany her aunt. She is
" no longer beset by her father and mother, who
" have both set out for the Baronet's estate in
" the north, and I am very much mistaken if the
" greatest uneasiness Matilda feels does not now turn
" on the uncertainty of her poor Edward's fate."

" Can it be possible," exlaimed Morland, " that
" she loves me! that she should be anxious about
" my fate? Do you not say this to flatter me, Sir?
" Pray tell me."—" I can tell you no more, my
" dear Emma:" said the Captain, going towards the window and seeming occupied with something passing in the court-yard, to which Morland's attention was also attracted. The other horseman who had attended the Captain in the road in the morning, was speaking to the young man whom Morland had seen from the parlour weeping so bitterly. The man, who in appearance was the Captain's servant, quitted the boy, and came up stairs to inform his master and young mistress that dinner was ready.

" Tom," said the Captain, " what is that young
" fellow so unhappy about?"—" Sir," replied Tom,
" he is the son of a farmer in the neighbourhood.
" His father being from home, he took a horse with-
" out his leave to go and see a race. In coming back

" he was stopped, in a narrow, crooked lane about a " mile off, by a man, who forced him to change " coats with him, and robbed him of his horse. He " is afraid to go home."

" Tom," said the Captain, " the robber did not " know the value of the coat he gave away: tell the " young man to feel in the right-hand pocket of it, " and he will find a purse of money, the sight of " which will amply satisfy his father for the paltry " nag he has lost."

Tom ran down with the good tidings, and soon after, the Captain and Morland looking over the window, witnessed the extreme joy manifested by the farmer's son at sight of the treasure he found, which Tom returning reported to be about twenty guineas. The father and daughter then went down to dinner, for which their exercise had given them an appetite; and after dinner, they mounted their horses and continued their journey.

CHAPTER IX.

To describe the state of Morland's mind, his ideas, reflections, fancies, and surprises, would be to fall into repetition. The travellers proceeded gently across the country to the north, and were two days on the road to Bridgewater. There Morland, who was scarcely recovered from the weakness that had remained upon him after his fever and spare diet at the little farm, expressed a desire to rest; and it was determined that the travellers should remain all the next day at Bridgewater. At night Tom, the apparent servant, who still attended the Captain, was dispatched to some place unknown to Morland, under pretence of a commission, the nature of which his master chose to keep to himself.

At the inn where they stopped, and which was a small, cleanly one in the skirts of the town, there was a number of French prisoners, some of whom were naval officers. The foreigners, misled by Morland's disguise, and struck with his face, exclaimed as he came in, loud enough to be heard by him, "What a very pretty girl!" The Captain and Miss Emma seemed to pay no attention to an indirect compliment expressed in a foreign language, and which was, perhaps, seasoned with a salt-water epithet. Morland went to bed, and slept till very late the next morning: but the Captain had risen and gone out very early.

Morland rose about eleven o'clock, and with the assistance of the chambermaid was endeavouring to make the best of his female attire, when a great noise was heard in the house below. The French officers were running in to avoid the populace, who were following, and throwing stones at them. As soon as they were in, they shut the door of the house against their pursuers. Presently a constable, with his staff, appeared at the door, and knocking loudly, demanded entrance. The landlord would have obeyed, but the officers prevented him. On either side of the door there was a violent tumult. Morland, naturally curious, ran from his room, and in French asked the prisoners the cause of the dispute. They, delighted to find an English lady who could understand them, replied, that some low people having insulted and struck them without any reason, they had repelled them. "It is astonishing," said the speaker, "that we should have been attacked in such an outrageous manner, as we are "under the protection of the government. They "certainly want to insult us still farther, but rather "than suffer it, we will bury ourselves beneath the "ruins of the house." They then got their swords,

and debated whether they should sally out on the mob or not.

Morland was still ignorant of the beginning of the fray, understood nothing of the law of nations, and knew not who was right or who was wrong. He saw much rage and determination within the house; and peeping out of a window observed a good looking man, in plain clothes, excessively angry, stirring up the mob. "I will have satisfaction," cried he, "I will have them before a Justice of the Peace."

The uproar increased, and both sides seemed to be in danger of some mischief, when Captain Godfrey suddenly appeared in the street, speaking in a very civil manner, first to the person who was inflaming the crowd, and then to the constable. "I "assure you, Mr. Orchard," said he, "and you, "constable, that the persons you want to arrest are "prisoners of war, entitled to respect. If they have "offended, or broke the peace, it must be through "ignorance. I know them, and whatever repara- "tion may be proper, I am sure they will not re- "fuse, and I offer myself as security for them. If "they must go before a justice of the peace, I un- "dertake to bring them, without the necessity of "coercion. Pray, disperse the crowd. Let me be "admitted into the house, and I engage that the "door shall be immediately opened to you. I "am confident when you have inquired into the "affair, you will be glad that you followed my ad- "vice."

The constable turning towards Mr. Orchard said; "I think we ought to be satisfied with this gentle- "man's undertaking; he speaks like a man acquaint- "ed with the laws of the country, and I thinks as "how you may make yourself easy, and trust the "business to his management."

Mr. Orchard was under the necessity of following

the advice of the constable, who went among the mob, and partly by persuasion, partly by threats, succeeded in dispersing them. Captain Godfrey then went up to the door of the inn, which was immediately opened to him. He accosted the French officers with an easy air, addressing them in their own language, with surprising facility: "Gentlemen," said he, "a man of great respectability, "one of the richest farmers in this neighbourhood, "conceives that you have offended him. I know "your innocence, and can make it appear; but it is "necessary to convince him of it, and to satisfy the "officer of justice. They are both disposed to listen to reason, and you ought, for your own sakes, "to enter into an explanation with them."

The French officers concurred in an opinion so rational. The door was opened, and Mr. Orchard and the constable being admitted, Captain Godfrey managed the business.

"Pray, Mr. Orchard," said he, "of what do you "complain? as these gentlemen do not understand "our language, I undertake to interpret for them."

"These Frenchmen," said the honest farmer, "met one of my daughters in her way from church, "and as she was crossing a field near the house, "three of them insulted her. Some of the young "men of the village coming up to her assistance "were knocked down by them. In the mean time "one of their companions was seen carrying off my "child. I heard of their villany as I came out of "church."

"Make yourself easy, Mr. Orchard," said the captain; "your daughter has neither been insulted "nor carried off. The three gentlemen, having "nosegays in their hands, happened to meet her, and "made her an offering of them, which she refused: "but neither did they understand her language,

" nor she theirs. At the time five young people of " the parish coming up attacked the gentlemen, and " a sharp conflict ensued. Your daughter was ex- " tremely frightened, and ready to drop, when " another person, an Englishman, offered her his " arm and saw her safe home, where she now is. " The origin of the dispute, the three nosegays, are " still lying on the field of battle."

" Are you certain of this, Sir?" said the farmer to the Captain.—" I am, indeed, Sir," replied he, " and pledge my honour for the truth of what I tell " you."

" In that case," said the farmer, " those that " have been ill-treated may go and ask for satisfac- " tion where they will; as for me, I intreat you, " Sir, to beg the gentlemen to accept my apology " for having too readily listened to the hasty reports " of some thoughtless people. And will you have " the goodness yourself to accompany me, with the " constable, to the justice's, in order to put a stop to " the business."

During the explanation, the officers kept their eyes fixed on the Captain and the farmer. They did not understand a word that was said, but they saw the countenance of Mr. Orchard become gradually calm, while that of the constable was expressive of dissatisfaction. The Captain then addressed the Frenchmen, saying, " make yourselves " easy, gentlemen, the matter is perfectly cleared " up: Mr. Orchard acknowledges himself to have " been in the wrong, and begs you will pardon the " part he has had in the insult of which you have a " right to complain." The Frenchmen bowed to Mr. Orchard, who returned their salute, and then withdrew, accompanied by Captain Godfrey and the constable.

CHAPTER X.

MORLAND, the only witness of the conclusion of this adventure, and whose knowledge of the two languages enabled him not to lose a word of what passed, remained with the foreigners. The eldest of the three going up to him said with a smile: "Madam, we understand scarcely more than half "of what has passed, but by all appearances we are "under the greatest obligations to your father. He "is probably one of our countrymen; for his French "is too pure, and he has taken too much pains to "serve us, not to be a Frenchman."

"He has acted *like a true Englishman*," replied Morland, "and such *no doubt* he is." This answer was a little at the expense of his candour. The more he saw of the Captain the less did he know what to make of him. In about an hour he returned to the inn. "Come, Emma," said he, "get your "hat and gloves: honest Orchard has invited us to "dinner, and I am come for you."

The serious air of Captain Godfrey, and the visit he proposed, almost disconcerted Morland. "Sure-"ly, Sir," said he, "such a figure as I am, you "should not think of carrying me into company; "what part would you have me play among stran-"gers?"

"That," replied the Captain, "of a young wo-"man, unaccustomed to the world, without manners, "and embarrassed by every thing; in short, that of "my daughter. You are very well disposed, I see, "to act as such, but you want improvement in the "character. I am by no means dissatisfied with "the manner in which you conducted yourself on "the road, and here, this morning; but you must

"try a larger theatre, where you are seen longer "and closer."

Morland, determined to suffer himself to a certain degree to be led, obeyed without farther expostulation, and accompanied the Captain to the place of appointment.

Farmer Orchard's house, with an air of the greatest simplicity, displayed not only ease but superabundance, and candour and benevolence were painted on the countenances of all his family. Mrs. Orchard and her three daughters, blooming, young, and lovely, came out to meet Morland, whom they welcomed with the most affectionate embraces; and two stout, tall, well-set lads made their bows to her, not quite so familiarly, but yet with a modest assurance. The dinner was such as may be imagined to be given in the country by a rich farmer: more neat than studied or elegant, more abundant than delicate, good cheer without ostentation, attention without ceremony, frankness without freedom, good humour without wit, garden stuff without seasoning, clear old ale, and two large plum-puddings. The Captain and his daughter were repeatedly believed to have a preference for every thing at table, and incessantly pressed to eat of all. The girls addressed their sprightly prattle to the feigned Emma, whom they regarded as their companion; and the lads, who were charmed, were constantly casting sheep's eyes at her. After dinner, Mr. Orchard and his sons continued at table with the Captain, while Mrs. Orchard and her daughters went with Morland into another room, where they made him drink a glass of cherry-bounce.

When the women thought themselves alone, the Miss Orchards, who had before restrained their words and caresses within tolerable bounds, gave a greater latitude to their expressions and kindness.

The situation of the counterfeit damsel became very embarrassing: ingratitude was foreign to his disposition, and common breeding required him to repay kindness with kindness. To play his part with the caution required by his mysterious conductor became more and more difficult, and it was fortunate for him that they were soon joined by the Captain and the Orchards. The elder of the youths brought a violin, and the younger a tabor and pipe, and proposed dancing. Captain Godfrey, with great good humour, seconded the proposal, and leading Mrs. Orchard into the middle of the floor, they figured round the room for some time, the Captain dancing with all the grace of a court, and with all the spirit, lightness, and agility of youth. The Miss Orchards, in turn, were admired for their natural graces. All went on well, when the elder of the young men, giving the violin to his father, stepped up to Morland and begged he would dance with him. He declared he could not. "Come, Emma," said the Captain, "though you have never been taught to "dance, you can manage your feet very well, the "company are indulgent, and will make every al- "lowance for you. We must learn, girl, to amuse "ourselves, and contribute to the amusement of "others. Though we are awkward at first, and "don't know what we are about, we improve by "practice. Make a couple of turns round the room, "attend to the tune, and foot it in time." Morland would not venture to oppose the Captain's desire, but he danced wretchedly. Any where else he would have been laughed at; but where he was, his compliance alone ensured approbation: the ladies all praised and embraced him, and the Captain, delighted, pressed him to his breast with more than common tenderness. They amused themselves in this manner till tea-time, after which they took

leave and parted, promising never to forget one another.

On their way back to the inn, the Captain, addressing Morland, said, "I cannot, my dear Emma, "tell you how much you charmed me, by your attention to my desire; you have completely gained "my heart by it. I should have made you sing, "but that you do it too well; and if I had made "you display before those good folks a talent you "so excel in, and the attainment of which is not "within their reach, it would have been a civility of "a nature by no means well placed. I thought it "better to make you dance, because your awkwardness at once gratified the passion for superiority, and proved a desire to make yourself "agreeable."

Morland, hearing himself perpetually called Emma or Miss, said mildly, "Though you have dressed "me as a young woman, Sir, pray do not forget "that I am not really one. Those girls—"

"I understand you," said the Captain, "they "embarrassed you; but you must go through trials "of this kind, to prepare you for greater. Get rid "of that little, sullen, discontented air; and pray "none of your *Sirs* or *Madams* with me. I am "your father, or your mother, as occasion requires; "and I assure you, whether I appear to you as the "one or the other, heaven could not have given "you one more tender." The Captain, fearful of hurting Morland too much by this reprimand, embraced him so affectionately that the poor fellow felt a degree of filial tenderness of which his heart had never before been sensible.

As they entered the inn, a man in regimentals accosted the Captain: "I hope I see your honour "well."—"Ha! is it you, Serjeant Flint?"—"Yes, 'Sir," replied the man, "it is your honour's old

" Serjeant, Harry Flint."—" I thought you were at " Bath, Flint," said Captain Godfrey. " Did not " you get leave to go down to some of your friends " there, that you might benefit by the waters?" " Truly, your honour," replied Serjeant Flint, " I " was on my way there; but on the road I happened " to fall in with an old comrade, who had set up the " sign of the George, God bless his Majesty! and " he persuaded me to try first what his brown beer " would do for me. I find myself getting better " fast, your honour, and as that's the case, what a " fool should I be to go and drink water."

" But Flint," said the Captain, " your discharge " has been sent after you. You are your own " master now. Our accounts are made up, and by " an application to our agent, you will be put into " the way of getting your money without more delay. " Your share amounts to a good round sum, and " will put it in your power to settle yourself agree- " ably in any part of England you like."

" Heaven reward your honour a thousand fold!" cried Flint, in the excess of rapture, produced by such good news. " I understand," continued he, " that this young lady is your daughter: may all the " blessings of heaven be showered down upon you " both! Pray, Miss, pardon my boldness; but " I must say, that there is not in the whole army " a worthier man, or a braver officer than your " father."

The Captain expressed his pleasure at these marks of Flint's attachment, and of the goodness of his heart: then turning to Morland, " Emma," said he, " I have no money about me, give the Serjeant " something to drink our health."

Morland, looking with astonishment at the Captain, asked how he could give what he had not got: " I have no money," said he. " No money! Em-

" ma!" replied Captain Godfrey—" yes, yes, you " have; remember the young man at Honiton, and " search your pockets."

Morland obeyed, and on searching found, among a number of little articles used by women, which he did not know were in his possession, a purse well filled with gold, from which he took a guinea, and gave it to the Serjeant, who returned his thanks and left them. With the purse still in his hand, Morland turned to the Captain, and asked what he was to do with the rest of the money. " Do good with " it, my child," replied he; " I advise you to lose " no opportunity: such opportunities are the most " precious junctures of life." " Well!" thought Morland, and he said it too, " if you appoint me " your almoner, your money *shall* be bestowed in " doing good."

CHAPTER XI.

Next morning the Captain and his daughter rose and set out early on their journey. The day passed without any thing particular happening, and at night they arrived at a small village too late to proceed any farther: yet the only place at which they could put up was a poor little ale-house, that afforded but one room, and a single bed, which the Captain and Morland were under the necessity of sharing between them. After a light supper, they went to bed, where Morland, young and unaccustomed to fatigue, immediately fell fast asleep, and never once turned himself till nine o'clock next morning, and then was awakened by the rays of the sun darting on his bed. Opening his eyes, and not seeing Captain Godfrey by him, he put the curtain a little aside

to look if he was in the room. No Captain was there: but he saw a woman, sitting at a table, her back turned to the bed, in a genteel dishabille and dressing-gown, combing her hair.

Morland, extremely surprised at this apparition, crept softly to the foot of the bed, to take a look of the new guest who had been permitted to make use of their little room. She was a middle-aged woman, with a noble air, a brown but fresh complexion, and fine black hair which she was taking great pains to adjust properly. Happening to cast her eye to the foot of the bed, she caught a sight of Morland's head peeping out between the curtains. She rose, and running to the bedside: "Well!" cried she, with a fond and lively air, and a sweet voice, "how "did my little girl sleep last night?"

Morland, opening his eyes to the utmost stretch of their lids, stared at the woman standing before him, and examined her some time, comparing what he had seen with what he now saw. He thought he traced some features both of the gypsy and of the Captain, but the lady's were much the handsomest. She seemed taller than either of them, and her carriage was very different; she had neither the same motion nor the same turn of countenance.

"Heavens!" cried he, "is it you, Madam?"— "What!" replied the lady in dishabille, "it must "be *Madam* then? you little madcap. I am now "your *mother*, and take care you don't forget it. "Get up, and come and help me: we must acquire "habits or we shall never be able to help ourselves "or others."

Morland rose, put on his petticoats, and in helping his mother discovered more obedience than aptness. As he handed her pins, the lady, though in a very modest way, allowed him to see enough of her

neck to convince himself that she was really of the sex it had pleased his conductor to adopt that day. As soon as she was dressed in her riding habit, the lady desired Morland to go and order the horses to be brought to the door: he did as he was bidden, and they were soon ready, the horse Captain Godfrey rode the day before now appearing with a side-saddle. Though the landlord and landlady of the public-house were a little surprised at the metamorphosis that had taken place under their roof, they were too well paid to think it any business of theirs, and they saw the ladies set off without any other notice than wishing them a good journey.

The time, as they travelled, did not hang heavy on their hands. Even had Morland's mind been free from a passion that keeps the imagination employed, the actions and metamorphoses of his guide, and their unintelligible connection with the ultimate happiness with which his hope was fed, would have supplied sufficient matter for his thoughts.

The lady chose to lead him through private and unfrequented roads; and the place where they stopped this day to dine was, both in look and accommodations, even inferior to the paltry public-house where they had slept.

On alighting, they were shown to a room of a tolerable size, and in a few minutes the lady went out to bespeak some refreshment, leaving Morland alone.

Three ill-looking men, sitting on a bench, in a little room adjoining, took notice of the feigned Emma, rose, and came into the room. One told Morland that he was a pretty girl, another stroked his chin, and the third wanted to kiss him. He defended himself, called for help, and gave the fellow a box on the ear. Little caring for his frowns,

cries, and blows, they all three laid hold of him, and were pulling him about, when the lady entered the room.

The men having cutlasses, the lady drew the first she could seize, and fell upon the rogues. One of them drawing his weapon, and turning upon her, she disarmed him in a moment, with wonderful dexterity.

This vigorous attack checked the assailants of Morland. The lady, brandishing her sword looked like an enraged Medea. Her eyes sparkled, she raised her voice, and in a hoarse tone pronounced some unintelligible words, the very sound of which was dreadful. The ruffians, with terror painted in their faces, stared at her, ran out of the room, and mounting their horses, which were fixed to a railing near the door, galloped off at full speed.

The lady, on this, went out to speak to the landlord of the public-house, and returned in a few minutes, as calm as if nothing extraordinary had happened. Morland asked no explanation, nor was his guide in the habit of giving any. They dined, and soon after proceeded on their journey, without a word tending to elucidation.

It is not to be understood, however, that our travellers were constantly silent as they rode along. On the contrary, in roads where they could ride abreast, a conversation both instructive and amusing was generally kept up.

The various productions of nature, being almost all unknown to Morland, his fellow traveller pointed them out, described them, explained the manner of cultivating them, and their different uses. She carefully directed his attention to the remarkable places in their way, and whenever they came to a spot famous in history, briefly related the events to which they owed their celebrity. Morland listened with

delighted attention, and almost fancied that he was attending to one of the best books ever written.

CHAPTER XII.

After travelling two days through bad roads, and a mountainous country, the lady informed Morland that they were entering Wales, and were near the end of their journey. "To-night," said she, "I "shall carry you to the house of a lady acquainted "with your good friend Captain Godfrey. You know "that you are his daughter, and I must now tell "you that I am his sister. The worthy woman with "whom you will be placed has two very amiable "daughters, who will be your companions. Their "mother, who is a complete Welchwoman, has "taken a pride in bringing them up as Welch girls, "and they speak nothing but Welch. At first they "will hardly understand what you say to them, and "you will understand them still less: this is an ad-"vantage of which you will be sensible. It will "relieve you from many difficult questions that "would puzzle you if you had not time to consider "your answers. When they are able to compre-"hend you, they will put a number of questions to "you respecting their friend the Captain, yourself, "and me. Now this is what you must say. You "lost your mother when very young; your father, "yielding to his taste for travelling, or called away "by his duty in the service to which he belonged, "trusted your education to a worthy farmer in the "neighbourhood of Bridgewater, named Orchard, "and you have seen very little of him. You know "as little of me, his sister. Your answers must be

" short: avoid all kind of confidence; remember " your happiness depends on your discretion. Cap- " tain Godfrey has been kind enough to apprize the " lady of our coming, and we may therefore expect " to be well received. To-morrow I shall leave " you: the separation will give me a great deal of " pain, my dear Emma, but I will continually watch " over you: all my care, however, will be fruitless, " if you do not watch over yourself. You may find " the time heavy in the retirement to which I con- " sign you. So much the better, my dear; you " should learn early to submit to such a state. Per- " sons in the most brilliant situations of life are sub- " ject to it, and they who do not know how to en- " dure it must be unhappy, and cannot be deemed " wise. You will here have an employment abso- " lutely necessary, which is, the learning of the lan- " guage of the country, in order to make yourself " understood in it. Hereafter you will be pleased " with yourself for having learned it; but as it will " not be sufficient to fill up your time, you may " amuse yourself with making lace. The daughters " of the lady, whose name is Ap-Owen, are perfect- " ly acquainted with the mode of working, and will " teach you with pleasure. You will at the same " time acquire the address and habits suitable to the " sex—"

" But, Madam," cried Morland, interrupting his pretended aunt, and speaking with a dissatisfied air, " you continue speaking of me as of a girl: am I to " remain under this appearance much longer?"

" Mind me, girl," replied the lady, frowning, " there will perhaps come a time when you will " grieve to give it up."—" But, Madam," said Morland—" But, Emma," interrupted she, " I am " not Madam: have you forgot that I am your " aunt? and do you think, by being untractable, im-

" patient, and sour, to convince me that you are " worthy of retaining the sex, of which as yet I " have only deprived you of the external appear- " ance? You belong to me, you are what I please " you to be; let your actions show your obedience, " and your words your desire to please me."

Morland fixed his eyes on his inexplicable relation, and saw severity in her looks. Instinctively prompted to respect her, and now accustomed to pay deference to all she said, he thought he had incurred her anger, and became alarmed. She, fearing that she had carried her harshness too far, threw her arms round his neck, and embraced him cordially: he returned her caresses, and their good understanding was restored.

The travellers soon arrived at Mrs. Ap-Owen's; where physiognomy, dress, language, customs, every thing, was new to Morland. The lady was received with the greatest respect, and he as the daughter of the best friend the family had. A convenient chamber was allotted for him. Mrs. Ap-Owen and her daughters studied to make themselves agreeable to him; and his aunt, when she left him, assured him that he had nothing to apprehend from want of attention on the part of his new associates. The very next day Morland found himself left among people all Welch; he appearing like one of the family, for one of Mrs. Ap-Owen's daughters being of his size, he had been desired to dress himself in some of her clothes, which he afterwards continued to wear.

It is so natural to wish to speak and be spoken to, that it is not surprising Morland should apply himself assiduously to acquire the Welch language. His progress, though rapid, was by no means marvellous, as his talents and memory had been early improved by study. In a fortnight he knew enough to

ask for every thing he wanted; in another fortnight he was acquainted with the names of all objects in the range of common notions; and in a short time he was able to support a conversation. This application, and learning to make lace, engaged some of his hours; meditation and solitary walks round the house filled up the rest of the day. The nights were longer: these he passed in dreaming of Matilda, and in striving to reconcile the hopes that had been given him, that he should see and possess her, with the singular means used by his guide. He carefully weighed the actions he had witnessed, and though some of them appeared extravagant, confounding his reason, yet all of those within the limit of his judgment were fair, wise, and noble. The consequence of these contending reflections was an eager desire to see this extraordinary being again, which was constantly kept up by Mrs. Ap-Owen and her daughters, who every day spoke to him of Captain Godfrey, and expressed their uneasiness at not hearing from him. Thinking that he might be able to draw some information from the Welchwomen, he asked them if their friendship with the Captain was of long standing. "He was introduced to "us here, upwards of ten years ago, my dear Miss," replied Mrs. Ap-Owen; "after which he spent a "great deal of his time with us, always considering "us as his family, and Wales as his country."— "Did you know," said Morland, "that he had "been married?"—"I learned it about five years "since," answered Mrs. Ap-Owen, "on a particular "occasion. A lady of this neighbourhood, of an "engaging person, young, and rich, the widow of a "magistrate, felt prepossessed in his favour, and he "appeared to have an esteem for her. I in a man-"ner took the business on myself. The match "would have been a very advantageous one, and I

" was extremely surprised at your father's indiffer-
" ence to such an establishment: but pressing him on
" the subject, he informed me, with an injunction
" of secrecy, that he was married, and had a child:
" he did not, however, say, and I did not know till
" lately, whether you were a girl or a boy."—" Did
" you know his sister too?" said Morland. " No,"
replied Mrs. Ap-Owen, " no man ever spoke less of
" himself, or of what belonged to him, than the Cap-
" tain: not, however, from a natural reserve in his
" character, but because when he was with others
" he seemed to lose sight entirely of himself."—
Morland asked if she thought there was a striking
resemblance between the Captain and his sister.
" A very striking resemblance," replied the good
lady: " she is not so brown as he, and has a more
" open countenance; yet if she were to put on her
" brother's light wig, and bring it low on her fore-
" head, she would be the very picture of him."

Morland, to avoid being questioned himself, ceased his inquiry; besides, nothing he heard tended to satisfy his reason, and the poor fellow, referring, naturally enough, all the illusions he had experienced to a perverted state of his intellect, yet struck with the evident reality of every thing, concluded that the singular being who appeared to have undertaken the government of him had assumed the person of a well-known and respectable character, in order to gain his admission into Mrs. Ap-Owen's house: " but," thought he, " what am I doing here? for what purpose is this " stratagem practised?"

Some weeks had now passed in this manner, when Captain Godfrey agreeably surprised Morland and his new acquaintance by his unexpected arrival. Morland did not advance to meet him, not knowing whether he were the real or the pretended Captain;

but his doubts were soon dissipated; a familiar look and an affectionate nod convinced him that his mysterious relation was come back.

The usual salutations over, the Captain accounted to the family for his long silence, which had been caused by some intricate transactions, now happily terminated. He had been settling very important accounts relative to affairs in which he had been employed. He said that he had been wandering about the world all his life, but was now determined to sit down with his little fortune in Sussex, whither he meant to carry his dear Emma, for whom he was now come. Mrs. Ap-Owen upbraided him in a friendly manner for settling at such a distance from her; but he assured her that it was absolutely necessary to his interest, and prepared her and her daughters for his departure the next day. The conversation passed in Welch, which the Captain with pleasure observed that Morland attended to and understood.

Next morning the travellers and their friends took an affectionate leave of one another. The road from the house being narrow, Morland rode behind the Captain, whose military air, and graceful manner of sitting his horse, he admired.

"What are you thinking of, girl?" said Captain Godfrey, speaking Welch. "Have you forgotten "English, Captain?" said Morland.

"No," replied the Captain, "but *you* will do "well to forget it. Another thing is, I may be plain "Captain Godfrey among my acquaintance, but be-"tween us, my child, are there not tenderer appel-"lations to be used?"—"I beg pardon," said Morland, "but we so often change our relation, that in "speaking to you, I forget whether to address you "as my father or my aunt."—"Then," replied the Captain, "I'll make that matter easy to you in fu-

" ture. You shall continue to see me under the " form I now wear, till *you* pass from your present " state into a new one: I will then appear to you in " that which is natural to me: may your conduct " lead to happy transformations!"

CHAPTER XIII.

Our travellers arrived in Sussex without meeting with any adventure worth relating. They stopped at a considerable village called Sutton, where they alighted near the gate of a handsome seat, opposite to which the Captain had hired a small house, the outward appearance of which had nothing showy, and the interior was furnished simply but neatly. A short stout girl was the only servant in the place, and Captain Godfrey, having sent away his horses, directly took possession with Morland of their new dwelling.

The next morning Morland when he awoke found at his bed side a complete suit of new clothes of Welch stuff. It was made with great taste, but still the short petticoat and trimmings of the country were preserved. He was looking at them when the Captain came in. " My dear Emma," said he, " you are to appear here as a plain Welch girl; but " you give too many English turns to the Welch " dialect; however, with the assistance of this dress " you will pass." He then assisted in putting on a pair of stiff stays, and showed him how to bring his little cap down to his eyes, and across his temples. " Your face," continued he, " will not lose any of " its attraction, and all the elegance of your person " will be preserved: you will be very handsome,

" my dear Emma; and as you will now have no " more excuses from fatigue, pray accustom your- " self to rise early. I appoint you housekeeper of " my little establishment. The maid will attend to " your orders: she understands Welch; remember " you are to speak no other language: if a sentence " of English escape your lips, I carry you back to " Wales, and you shall not see me again for six " months. Though your Welch is not very good, " the woman will make it out pretty well, and when " she is at a loss I'll interpret for you."

Morland, being a novice in this new office, acquitted himself at first but indifferently in the character of housekeeper; but accustomed for some months to submit to every thing, he made himself acquainted with the part allotted to him, and divided his time between his domestic occupations and his lace-cushion.

The Captain went out and came in at regular hours. The first thing he did whenever he came home was to go to Morland with an eagerness that always seemed new, and he left him with equal solicitude. His attentions were carried to an extreme. He was of an even temper, but he did not like to be contradicted. If his pupil put any questions to him, he answered with infinite patience and condescension all those that were within the limits prescribed to the youth's curiosity. He spoke willingly of Matilda, of whom he always gave some pleasing account, and took delight in feeding his hope of one day seeing her again. On subjects relative to government, and to the manners and customs of the different states of Europe, his information was most satisfactory, and his remarks conveyed the clearest illustration. His ideas were accurate, his definitions brief, and his distinctions marked. But when through idle curiosity, or with a view of perplexing

his instructor, the pupil attempted to turn the conversation on the abstract sciences, and the mysteries of nature, the Captain would reply in a serious tone; "Do not tempt me, Emma: if I were "acquainted with all truths, which can never be the "lot of a finite being, I would conceal from you "even those that you are to know. Study nature, "force her secrets from her if you can; it is the "way to improve your judgment and your powers: "but be assured you never will be a conjurer. "Take care of attempting to be too wise, it would "be dangerous." After this little essay on morality the Captain threw off his serious look, and fell again into the familiar and gay.

Returning one morning earlier than usual—"Emma," said he to Morland, "we must make an "addition to our dinner to day; my friend the vi-"car is coming to dine with us: you shall assist me "in entertaining him. He is a polite man, but he "will not understand much of your Welch: how-"ever, I will act as interpreter; though you, in-"deed, will understand his language, and not lose a "word of what he says. He will perhaps astonish "you much, Emma, but command yourself. Pre-"serve your ease, check your emotions: by your "manner of behaving I shall judge what depend-"ence I may place hereafter on your prudence: "mind, above all things, to appear less cold towards "me. Remember you are from Wales, where chil-"dren love their parents even more than they re-"spect them." After this short sermon, Morland, prepared for something new, went to order the addition for the vicar, who was punctual to the dinner hour.

His name was Allen, a man drawing towards fifty, personable enough, and no Solomon; but he had all the appearance of a polite man, and a good clergy-

man. He had a fine appetite, and spoke little during dinner; however he now and then stole a look from his plate to throw at the pretended Emma, whose beauty he admired, and extolled to the Captain. When the cloth was removed he asked the young lady if she preferred the fashion of her own country so much as not to dress herself according to the reigning taste in England. Morland, at a loss what to say, answered that the preference was not so much his as his father's. The reply was in Welch, but sufficiently mixed with English to be understood by the vicar, or nearly.

"Emma deceives you, my dear vicar," said the Captain; "she shall leave off her Welch dress when "she speaks good English." Morland said nothing, and the conversation turned on other subjects.

"You have done well, Captain," said Mr. Allen, "to come and settle in this village. The situation "of it is charming, the air healthy, things cheap, "and the people good; you could not have chosen "a better place throughout England to enjoy your "half-pay in. The lady of the manor, Mrs. John-"son, the widow of a rich and respectable gentle-"man, is a most worthy woman in all respects. I "shall have the pleasure of making you acquainted. "We have already been speaking of you: indeed "she desired me to make you an apology for not "having waited on you and your daughter before, "but she has been indisposed for some days past. "She lives in a very retired manner, and seldom for "a moment leaves her niece, Miss Wallingford, "who, in consequence of a very laughable adven-"ture, has been obliged to throw herself under her "protection. You have certainly heard of it, Cap-"tain: the affair made a great noise."

"I seldom attend to such reports," replied the Captain. "But I must tell you this," said Mr. Al-

len: "it was a very odd affair. I have it from Mrs. "Johnson herself, under whose eyes the whole mat- "ter passed. Lady Wallingford had a footman who "was remarkably handsome, and sung in the finest "style. Miss Wallingford was suffered to take les- "sons of him; they played and sung together every "day, and seemed to understand each other too "well. Sir Robert, as he declared, surprised the "fellow making love to his daughter: he was abso- "lutely said to be on his knees; on which the Ba- "ronet drew his sword, made a monstrous noise, "and ordered all his servants to mount horses, "and ride in different directions over the country "to take the man, who had fled at the sight of "Sir Robert, and escaped. The son of a certain "Duke, who had gone into Devonshire to conclude "a marriage with the lovely Matilda Wallingford, "left the country suddenly. The young lady's re- "putation suffered, and yet, would you think it, Sir? "this footman, this gallant was—" here the vicar pointed to Morland with his finger—"was just as "dangerous as that young lady, and not a bit more "—the person charged with such audacity was a "young woman."

"A young woman!" exclaimed the Captain: "is "there proof of that? Did not you say the fellow "escaped?"

"Proofs in plenty," replied the vicar, "a thou- "sand proofs clearer than day. Mrs. Johnson her- "self examined them all, she knows the fact: all the "servants in the family and all the neighbours "were convinced of it. She is the daughter of a "Mr. Forrester, a man of property, in Kent, who "found her out, went for her, and carried her home. "Miss Wallingford's reputation is perfectly re- "trieved, and every body blames the Baronet for his "hastiness and imprudence."

The Captain appeared to be highly entertained with the story, and said it was a very extraordinary one. The vicar enjoyed it, and laughed still more than his friend: "It is enough to make one die with "laughing;" said he, "but I don't see that Miss "Emma laughs: perhaps she does not understand "it?"—"Not very well," replied the Captain, "but I shall explain the adventure to her by "and by, and I'll be bound for it she will laugh in "her turn." The vicar having finished his bottle, rose and took his leave.

Morland, through the whole of the anecdote, had sat in a state of utter astonishment; but was no sooner alone with the Captain than he exclaimed, in English: "What! Matilda at Sutton! persuaded "that I am a woman! convinced of it by proofs "clearer than day! It is you, Sir, who have played "me this trick—some phantom of your raising—"

"Softly, softly, Emma!" said the Captain—"you are abusive, you forget your Welch, and who "I am. I have hitherto been wiser than you: why "doubt me now? Your mistress *is* at Sutton, within "a few paces of you, you breathe the same air, and "yet you are dissatisfied. Her reputation was at "stake, and perhaps lost, she was given up by her "family, and exposed on your account to the bit-"terest pangs; well! with a flourish of my wand I "changed the scene; I turned the laugh on her "side, and exposed those to ridicule who deserved "it more than she did. I have even revenged her "on Lord Chatterton, who is now extremely morti-"fied at having so lightly given her up."

"But," cried Morland, "to make her take me "for a woman!—"—"I deceive only those whom "it is my interest to deceive," said the Captain: "but even suppose her to be of that opinion, it "might not be very improper; for heaven knows

" how soon these impatient bursts, this hasty tem-
" per, may provoke me to justify the opinion. Be
" assured that I can as easily make you my daugh-
" ter, as become myself your father. The punish-
" ment I own would be severe, and I trust you will
" not drive me to such extremities. I wish to find
" you more docile, to be better satisfied with you,
" and to make you happy. Give over tormenting
" yourself, when I am watching for the moment of
" your happiness. Come, here's your cushion—
" finish this row of lace; and, when I come back,
" don't let me see the slightest remains of dis-
" content."

Here the Captain went out, and Morland took up the lace, without knowing what he was about, what he had to hope, or what to fear.

CHAPTER XIV.

The vicar was highly pleased with every thing at the Captain's; with his manners, his table, his wine, and above all with Miss Emma's fine eyes. So many good things attracted him frequently to his friend's house, where he soon acquired the freedom of dropping in without ceremony, and where to make himself useful and engaging, if possible, he proposed to teach the young Welchwoman English. The Captain very seriously imparted to his pupil the vicar's kind offer. Morland refused, as he knew English much better than the man who proposed to instruct him. " Learn, notwithstanding, my dear Emma," said the Captain. " In the world, if we would of-
" fend nobody, we must perpetually submit to be
" taught things we know, by people who are igno-

"rant of them." Morland not daring to persist in his refusal, became the vicar's scholar in spite of his repugnance. His lessons were long and tedious, for the pupil was compelled to feign great ignorance: and fortunately the master was easily deceived. If Morland happened to pronounce a word too correctly for a beginner, the teacher considered the blunder in the part assumed, as a rapid progress, ascribing at least the half of this supposed success to his own ability in teaching. He became more and more zealous in his instructions, and would have been insupportable, had he not frequently spoken of the inhabitants of the mansion opposite the Captain's house. At first his account of them was not of much importance, but one morning he brought news that nearly drove Morland to despair.

It seems that Sir Charles Cawtherley, a Baronet of immense fortune, and a friend of Mrs. Johnson's, had just returned from his travels. His family was an ancient one, and he was himself very amiable. He was in love with Matilda, whose aunt openly encouraged his passion, and the families on both sides were eager for an alliance mutually convenient.

Morland, thrown off his guard by this account, was on the point of betraying himself, when the Captain, who was present and watching his countenance, restrained him by a look. The vicar, however, soon left them, and Morland's impatience again broke out.

"Here, here," cried he, "is an end to all my "hopes! Here am I brought in this ridiculous "masquerade to witness the marriage!—And yet, "after all, what am I? to think but for a moment of "disputing the heart of a beautiful heiress with a "man blessed with all the advantages of nature "and fortune?"

"I'll tell you what you are," said the Captain: "You are a very irritable, mistrustful, little Welch

" girl ; giving way to your feelings without thinking " a moment. Because a marriage is on foot, is it " consummated ? If so, I must call you Mrs. Allen, " for my friend the vicar has been proposing to me " to settle on you a hundred a-year out of his pri- " vate property, and five hundred pounds which he " has saved from his living, besides presenting you " with all the jewels, wardrobe, and other effects of " the late Mrs. Allen. Mrs. Johnson, Miss Wal- " lingford, and others have been recommending this " match to me, and you would almost make me wish " it to take place ; yet, do you think yourself mar- " ried?"

" Allen propose to marry me!—me!" exclaimed Morland,—" and do you suffer him to entertain such " an idea!"

" I neither encourage nor discourage him," re- plied the Captain: " I am a kind father, and do not " intend to force your inclination—"

" This is rather too much," said Morland; " are " you in earnest in what you say ? Do you propose " to me to keep up the farce of the possibility " of marrying me to this parson ?"

" I propose to you," said the Captain, " to be- " lieve nothing lightly, and to behave kindly to per- " sons whose intentions do us honour. Mr. Allen " preaches to-morrow, and hopes to see us at church, " which I have promised."

Next morning, when the bell began to ring, Mr. Allen called at the Captain's, in order to accom- pany him and the pretended Emma to church, that he might place them properly. The church was adjoining to Mrs. Johnson's shrubbery, from which a private communication led to the gallery on one side of it, where pews were appropriated to the fa- mily, their inmates, and the several attendants. The gallery on the opposite side was open to the

public, and to this the Captain and his Emma were conducted by the vicar. On entering, the first object that struck Morland's eyes was Matilda in the opposite gallery, beautiful as an angel. A gentleman, whose exterior advantages were not inferior to her own, sat behind talking to her.

How agitated was Morland at this unexpected sight! what passions took possession of his soul! Love, jealousy, the dread of being known. The Captain, aware of all that passed within him, pressed his arm, and in a whisper, desired him to take courage. The service beginning almost immediately, and the ladies joining in the prayers, Morland had time to recover himself before he was observed; but he could not escape some glances from Sir Charles Cawtherley, who, at the first interval of the service, whispered the ladies, and directed their eyes to the pretended Welch girl, on whom the looks of the whole gallery were soon fixed.

Mrs. Johnson looked only to satisfy the curiosity excited by Sir Charles. Matilda was both surprised and agitated. She was struck with the resemblance, and not thinking herself observed, she never took her eyes off Morland: far from suspecting that it could be himself, she could not get the better of the astonishment occasioned in her mind by so perfect a resemblance, and Mr. Allen finished his sermon without her having attended to a single word of it. Morland, on the other hand, ogled by Sir Charles, gazed at by Matilda, and stared at by Kitty, hardly ever ventured to raise his eyes. The Captain appeared cool and inattentive, as if he neither knew nor saw any thing particular, and took no part in what was passing; but as he was going out, Mr. Allen, followed by one of Mrs. Johnson's footmen, came up to him with a pressing invitation to dine with the ladies, which was accepted; and presently Morland,

without having had time to prepare for such an interview, was in the same room with Matilda. He had entered as it were, blindfold. Mrs. Johnson received both him and the Captain very kindly. The company noticed his Welch dress, and praised it for its neatness; and many civil things were said of his person. Matilda alone was silent: but though she said nothing, she looked surprised enough at finding so much, and yet so little difference. The little Welch mob coming down upon his forehead and about his temples, made a degree of alteration in his countenance, and softened his features. His shape and air were not the same, and his whole appearance was a very good representation of a young, timid Welchwoman, the daughter of a half-pay officer, courted by Mr. Allen; yet she had a wonderful resemblance to Edward.

At dinner, Morland, seated opposite to Sir Charles and Matilda, never raised his eyes without observing theirs fixed upon him. The Baronet often spoke to him, and was very gallant in his expressions; Matilda, though with an absent air, answered him politely and with sweetness. Every word of the conversation was a dagger to his heart: he was persuaded that Mrs. Johnson already considered Sir Charles as her nephew, and thought that her niece treated him as her lover. He experienced the extreme of vexation and jealousy: fortunately, the usual character of his countenance was not sufficiently known to give room for remarking how it was ruffled; and, indeed, the attention of the company had been drawn to another quarter; for the Captain, in consequence of a question Sir Charles had put to him, was relating an extraordinary circumstance, of which he had been a witness. He told the story with infinite spirit, and most agreeably. All were listening to him, except Matilda; and Morland had

time to breathe and recollect himself. The remainder of the day he passed in efforts to restrain his feelings. When it was time to go, Mrs. Johnson expressed her satisfaction to the Captain in forming an acquaintance with him and his daughter; whom both she and Matilda kissed at parting.

When they were gone, Matilda felt herself uneasy: her emotion was confused, something more powerful than a rising prepossession spoke to her heart in favour of this young stranger: can one part, without regret, with the picture of a cherished lover? As for poor Morland, he was beside himself. The impression of the kiss he had received from Matilda had reached his heart; he still felt on his lips the warmth with which it was given, his senses wavered, his head grew giddy. Mr. Allen and the Captain supported him by the arms as they walked home, and almost carried him. The good vicar complimented his friend on the warm reception he had met with at Mrs. Johnson's, where he had charmed every body; and even Sir Charles himself had declared that he would make every advance to obtain his friendship, if possible. No wonder, then, that a great intimacy soon took place between the two families. Sir Charles courted the Captain's regard, Mrs. Johnson and Matilda regularly visited his pretended daughter, and their favourite Emma became their daily companion. Morland, however, never returned home in good humour.

"My dear girl," said the Captain, "I don't understand you: though you enjoy the sight, conversation, and familiarity of the person you love, yet you are not pleased."

"I loved only passionately," said Morland, "but you make me love to madness. I see only what enchants and distracts me, or what deprives me of

" all hope. Happiness for me is now become im-
" possible.——"

" Impossible!" said the Captain: " Yes!" replied Morland, " impossible: if you wish me not to think " so, if you would spare me the most dreadful pangs, " send away Sir Charles."—

" You do not wish then to have him for a rival—" said the Captain—" well! you must have him for a " lover."—

" A lover! I!" exclaimed Morland, " what new " ridiculous scene now!"—" Ridiculous or not," said the Captain, " you must have patience, or I " shall lose mine." Here he went out and left Morland alone: which had not lately happened; for he had staid much at home, and become a constant companion.

CHAPTER XV.

SCARCELY had Captain Godfrey been gone a quarter of an hour, when Sir Charles came in; and surprised at finding neither the Captain nor the vicar with the supposed Emma, accosted her with rapture. " How " strange, my sweet girl," cried he, " to find you " without your constant guardians! It is quite a pro-" digy." Morland, compelled to sustain his character, attributed the Captain's assiduity to his affection. " Oh no! my angel, not at all," replied Sir Charles; " there's no excess of affection in the case. He is a " widower and still young, you are in his way, and " to get rid of you he is going to make you house-" keeper and nurse to an old crazy village parson; " and he never leaves you, for fear some friend

" should show you the consequences of a match so " absurd, so little suited to you."

Morland looked the handsome Baronet full in the face, curious to know the result of a conversation opened in this manner. Sir Charles finding that he was attended to, pursued his point. " How have I long- " ed," cried he, " to speak to you alone! My dear " Emma, it was impossible to see you and not love " you. From the very first day we met, you must " have perceived the effect of your charms on my " heart, in spite of my attempts to restrain myself be- " fore those by whom we have been constantly ob- " served: never was love more ardent than mine."

As he made this gallant declaration, the Baronet suddenly seized one of Morland's hands and kissed it. The latter could not help laughing as he disengaged it. " You are mistaken, Sir Charles," said he, " you think you are speaking to Miss Wallingford."

" No, charming Emma," replied the Baronet eagerly, " I am not mistaken. Matilda Wallingford " is an amiable, good girl, and as our friends wish to " match us, I have shown no repugnance to the alli- " ance; but what a difference between the esteem I " feel for her, and the passion with which you have " inspired me! I adore you, Emma; I cannot live " without you, and I would with pleasure sacrifice " my fortune and my life to you. Oh! let me " snatch you from this ill-suited marriage; this fru- " gal, sordid existence; this miserable little village: " London awaits you; come and share my fortune " there; come and let us be happy."

Sir Charles, transported with passion, had fallen on his knees at Morland's feet, and was proceeding to add the rhetoric of embraces to the eloquence of words, when, hearing the noise of some one approaching, he abruptly threw himself into a chair, assuming all the calmness imaginable. The person

was Mr. Allen: he was soon after followed by the Captain, who found his Welchwoman swelling with smothered ire between her two suitors, but prudent enough not to suffer it to break out till they were gone.

When alone with the Captain, Morland again ventured to expostulate: "You were in haste, Sir," said "he, to keep your word with me; Sir Charles is as mad "as Mr. Allen. I do not lay these burlesque pas- "sions to the account of *my charms; yours* can effect "more than mine. Allow that this may be of use "to you, and to me: I am ready to suppose it; but "should you not recollect that these gentlemen are "continually heaping kindnesses upon you? The "friendship they show you on every occasion "has hitherto induced me to treat them as your "friends. Mr. Allen, however, is extremely dis- "agreeable to me; and I cannot say I have any re- "spect for Sir Charles; but I now consider him as "your victim, and I pity him. How am I to behave "to them? Do you foresee an end to my perplexity, "and their madness?"

"But, seriously, you are scolding me, Emma;" replied the Captain, good humouredly. "I thought "I deserved more kindness and confidence from "you, and hoped that you would have been more "tranquil in whatever scenes passed around you, "whether I took any part in them or not: but your "passions make it very difficult to govern you. "You would, perhaps, have tired out the patience "of any other, but mine equals my tenderness for "you, and consequently has no bounds. Hitherto "you have had no reason to complain of me, and "will you refuse to be guided by me a little longer? "Doubt every thing you see; suspend your judg- "ment as to me and others, and let me pursue my "designs without impeding them."

" But how," said Morland, " am I to act with " these strange lovers that you have given me?"— " Treat them," replied the Captain, " neither coolly " nor warmly: they will pursue their little views; " but they cannot go far." Morland sighed, and resigned himself once more.

He continued to see Sir Charles every day, either at the Captain's or Mrs. Johnson's; but as he was never left alone with him, he escaped with some stolen glances, or a tender squeeze of the hand: that was nothing; but one night he found among his lace the following letter:

To the charming Emma.

" We are both of us on the point of being ren- " dered irretrievably miserable. I have heard the " Captain conversing with Mrs. Johnson and Allen " on your marriage, which will not be deferred above " a week longer. Will you, my angel, suffer your- " self to be sacrificed to this old, doting priest? No " consideration is shown for you, and will you show " any for others, with a certainty of being wretched " for life? Consult your own heart, and your lover. " Fly from the low, paltry views before you, and dis- " pose of me and of my fortune. Your prudence in " not mentioning what passed when we were inter- " rupted by the detestable parson, convinces me " that you are not unfavourable to me. How happy " shall we be! What enchanting pleasures await us! " Name but the day and hour, and a post-chaise " shall be ready at the end of the village to take you " to London, where you will be received by some " charming friends of mine, who will take care of " you and entertain you, while my affairs, and the " necessity of concealing our attachment for a time, " compel me to remain here. How anxious shall I

" be during this short interval! With what rapture " shall I fly to you! Yet perhaps I but flatter myself, " perhaps I am indebted solely to your natural good- " ness of heart for not discovering the passion I de- " clared to you. Drive me not to despair, lovely " Emma: by a look, or by a word from your pen, let " me know that you approve the love, and the pro- ' posal of

" Your devoted

" CHARLES CAWTHERLEY."

" Here, Sir;" said Morland, giving this letter to the Captain; " am I to marry Allen, or elope with " Sir Charles?"

" To do either," replied the Captain, " would be " going a little too far; and I think we shall be able " to make a better match for you." Saying which he coolly put Sir Charles's letter into his pocket, but took it out again in a moment and tore it to pieces. " I have," continued he, " received letters from " Dorsetshire, that oblige me to make some arrange- " ments in which you are concerned. I am going " out, and on my return will tell you how I have " succeeded."

Morland, left by himself, first occupied his thoughts with the letter, Sir Charles's project, and the cool, unconcerned manner with which the Captain treated these events; then, soon after, buried in thought, he reasoned thus with himself: " If by supernatural " means, he compels a young man into an absurd pas- ' sion, is he not a promoter of folly? He has received " letters from Dorsetshire; and must in consequence " make some arrangements: I am concerned in them! " What concerns can I have in Dorsetshire?—The " more I think, the less can I discover the views of " this man. What do I say? Man! Don't I know " he is a woman when he pleases? Do I know what

"he is? He keeps me under this whimsical disguise, "requires me to act ridiculously, and exposes all "about me to do the same, yet I forget myself and "am pleased in his company! If I would oppose him "in any thing I feel myself forced to submit to the "ascendency he has assumed over me. I cannot "even comprehend the nature of the influence he "uses to govern me; it is not painful, it seems to "draw its power from my own heart: resistance I "find impossible, obedience easy; it is attended with "no remorse, my mind is as tranquil as in the per-"formance of a duty.—Am I indeed mad! or am I "bewitched like Allen, like Sir Charles, like all, "in short, whom chance throws in the way of "the——"

The Captain here broke in upon Morland, and interrupted his meditation. "My dear Emma," said he, "my affairs compel me to be absent for some "days. I was afraid I should have been obliged to "leave you here alone with the servant, but on con-"sulting Mr. Allen, an arrangement has taken place, "which no doubt will be more agreeable to you: "you shall spend the time of my absence at Mrs. "Johnson's, where you will enjoy the company of "Matilda."—"Of Matilda!" exclaimed Morland eagerly, "and am I to be distracted by the pre-"sence of Sir Charles?"

"You would have him then excluded from Mrs. "Johnson's?" said the Captain, with a thoughtful look, as if pondering on some important affair—"Well, Emma," added he after a moment's silence, "you force me to do strange things——You shall "see Sir Charles no more. Forget the part you have "had in his adventure, and do not ever mention "his name. But after this mark of attention, I think "I may expect that you will continue to regulate your "conduct by my advice. You are now about to be

" put to a very delicate trial. Can you from morn-
" ing to night bear the sight, and perhaps the ca-
" resses of the person you love, without betraying
" your secret? Know, that your happiness depends
" on this essential point. If you are discovered,
" Matilda is ruined, my honour suspected, your per-
" son exposed, and you will be deprived of every
" prospect, but an obscure retreat in Wales. But,
" more; if, forgetting your feigned character, you
" become capable of attempting to abuse the con-
" fidence it will gain you, you know my power,
" my vengeance shall follow quick, and prevent
" the crime by a metamorphosis most mortifying to
" your pride."

He had not time to extend his instructions, for Mr. Allen came in from the ladies to conduct Miss Emma to them, and the chaise being ready the Captain drove off as they left the house.

CHAPTER XVI.

MORLAND, received at Mrs. Johnson's as the pretty Welchwoman, was soon at home in the family. Sir Charles was gone, and he now became Matilda's companion, passed all his days with her, and at night slept in a little room adjoining her chamber, where Kitty used to sleep. He was treated with the utmost kindness, served with attention, and his slightest wishes anticipated. His life was pleasantly spent, notwithstanding a little dilemma into which he was thrown the very day after the Captain left Sutton, from the ladies proposing to dress him in the fashionable way. They said it would be very becoming to him, and following the idea with spirit, a

complete equipment was soon produced from the wardrobes of Mrs. Johnson and Matilda. Morland in vain opposed it; they only thought him a little wilful, and Kitty had absolutely raised her hand to pull off the Welch mob. Dreading the power of the unintelligible being who had assured him that he was for ever watching over him, he struggled to prevent any alteration in the apparel which it was his will he should wear. Nor was the change all he had to apprehend, it was probable he would be discovered as he was stripped. Fortunately Mr. Allen came in, and seeing his earnest opposition, prevailed upon the ladies to drop their scheme; but Matilda asked her aunt how Mr. Allen at his age could think of marrying a little savage: "for a savage she is," cried she; "handsome indeed, but without common sense."

"She is as like Miss Forrester," said Kitty, "as two "drops of water; but only in her face." This speech of Kitty's brought fresh roses to Matilda's cheeks, which however passed unnoticed.

On his side, Morland saw the ill effect of his obstinacy, but he willingly submitted his Welch disposition to the rigour of criticism, if it did but save him from such a dilemma as that from which he had been rescued by Mr. Allen.

Matilda, soon forgiving his prejudices and little wilfulness, treated him with her usual kindness, passed whole mornings with him, sung the airs he had taught her at Crayhill, gazed at him, and when he seemed not to notice her, shrugged her shoulders.

It was her custom in the morning to read French aloud, in order to improve herself in the pronunciation of it. As she read she turned her eyes on Morland, and speaking in French in the same tone as she was reading, "*Pauvre* Edward," said she, "*voila* "*vos traits; mais où est votre ame?* There are your "features; but where is your soul? I wonder what

" is become of that worthy clergyman who came to " Crayhill to speak to me about you. How amiable, " Edward, was your innocent artifice in feigning to " be Miss Forrester for the sake of my reputation, " and how did the worthy minister excite my grati- " tude in telling me of it! How did he comfort me " in assuring me that your birth was not inferior to " mine, and that I need not blush to cherish the fond " prepossession of my heart. Fortune, he told me, " was the only obstacle—and perhaps—Oh! where " is that good, cheering, dear man! He promised to " see me again, alas! did he but know my tendernesss, " anxiety, impatience! Oh! Edward! dear Edward! " a thatched shed with you were preferable to all the " wealth, state, and honours intended for me. No, " never will I love any other than you. I swear be- " fore this idol so like you, that I will love you as " long as I exist."

Here Matilda stopped a moment, then continued still in French, with great emotion: " This foolish " Welch creature looks at me with Edward's eyes. " She will turn my brain." Here a shower of tears came to her relief.

What a situation for Morland! What must have passed in his mind! Such surprising, flattering, tender dicoveries! Who could this generous clergyman be that had gone to Crayhill as from him, and to whom the mystery of his birth was known, though to himself still a mystery! How! his mistress thinking only of him, preferring him to all the world, and suffering such anxiety on his account! What efforts did it require not to betray his secret, not to throw himself at the feet of an object adored, and adorable! In restraining himself he suffered all that a feeling, grateful, and impassioned heart can suffer; yet he had the command of himself till he saw Matilda shed tears. Then, indeed, his self-command forsook him

for a moment; he threw down the cushion with the lace, raised his eyes, opened his arms, and was just going to speak, when the figure of the Captain uttering his threats presented itself to his imagination, and made him recollect himself. He felt that he should lose Matilda for ever; already the hateful petticoat he wore seemed to take root upon his hips: he threw himself back on his seat, asking in his usual jargon, but with a tremulous voice, what ailed her, and why she cried.

"Oh! nothing, Emma," replied Matilda, confused, and too much engaged by her own feelings to observe his agitation, "I am only reading a story which has "affected me very much, and which would have the "same effect on you if you could read it." On making this answer she retired to her dressing-room, no doubt to give vent to her tears unwitnessed, and displeased with herself for having discovered such violent emotions before a stranger, who, notwithstanding her inexperience and ignorance, might partly guess the cause.

On his side, Morland, having recovered himself, enjoyed the exquisite delight of loving and being beloved. The tears he had caused to flow he would have given his blood, nay his life to stop; but the dread of crushing for ever hopes so dear to both of them operated sufficiently on his mind to enable him to preserve his secret. He had apprehensions, however, of more difficult trials, and he at once wished and feared the repetition of a scene that had intoxicated him with joy even while it filled his heart with anguish; but fortunately it was not his fate to have his resolution put again to the test: Matilda was more guarded, time passed without any uncommon occurrence, and the Captain returned from Dorsetshire. He enquired how his daughter had behaved, received answers with which he could not but be

pleased, thanked the ladies for their kindness to Emma, and took her home to his little habitation.

"All goes well, Emma," said he to Morland, when they got home; "Allen will be here to day, we will "leave the house to his care and set out for Dorset-"shire, whither very important business calls us."

"But shall I not see Matilda again?" cried Morland. "You resume men's clothes to-morrow," replied the Captain, "do you think you can appear "in them boldly at Mrs. Johnson's?"

"Am I to be dressed as a man to-morrow?" exclaimed Morland—"You are sorry for it, my dear "Emma," replied the Captain, "didn't I foretell "that you would? Do justice to my art, and place "more confidence in me."—"I have always had con-"fidence in you, my dear father," said Morland, affectionately; "and after the favours I have received "from you, I can entirely repose in you."—"We "shall see, Emma," replied the Captain: "you "think that you can depend upon yourself; I know "you, and fear you for your own sake; your senti-"ments will waver again."

Morland was sure that he never should mistrust him, and in the best understanding with each other, they went out that very evening to take leave of Mr. Allen and the ladies. As the Captain kept his house at Sutton, and talked only of an excursion for some weeks, the hope of seeing one another again soon lessened the pain of separation.

The next morning the Captain woke Morland before day, and made him put on the clothes he mentioned the day before; they were very plain: a chaise and four appeared at the gate, the boys dressed lightly, elegantly, and exactly alike: two trunks were put into the boot; the travellers took their seats; crack, crack, went the postboys' whips; away flew the horses at full gallop.

Till their arrival in the county of Dorset, Morland saw nothing new in his situation, except that the Captain from the time they left Sutton constantly called him Edward, and my son. As soon as they entered Dorsetshire, however, the conversation took a turn as serious as extraordinary.

"Hitherto, my dear boy," said the Captain, "it "has not been permitted me to attend to the esta- "blishing of your fortune and rank in life, but it is "time to reflect seriously, and to choose what you "will be. You are now a man; society has indispens- "able claims upon you, and it behoves you to play "a part on the great theatre of life. Consult your "disposition and inclination. I do not mean to bias "your choice, only fix upon something, Edward: "all the professions you have heard of are open to "you, and I make but one condition with you, and "that is, when you have chosen, to be steady, and "pursue it like a man of honour.—Why don't you "answer me, Edward? Is it the limits of my power "that you doubt? Try to believe me again, my son, "and determine."

Morland, again in spite of himself distrustful, thought it best to appear otherwise. "I do not know "who I am," replied he, "and scarcely know the "different professions by name: how then can I "weigh the advantages and disadvantages, the du- "ties required and my ability?"

On this the Captain undertook to assist him in his choice. The various states and professions of men were taken under consideration; the less they suited a husband for Matilda, the less agreeable were they to Morland, who naturally referred all to that idea, even though he regarded the conversation as a mere jest. There could be no propriety in a young beautiful heiress bestowing her hand on a clerk in a counting-house, a farmer, a country clergyman, a student of

law, or a subaltern officer. Morland found something to object to in all. "It does not signify, my "son," said the Captain, "you must decide; you "must be something. I have proposed to you pro-"fessions in the middling stations of life: and I should "have had no objection to see you fixed in one of "them, for happiness does not depend upon rank: "but tell me, does your ambition soar higher? Should "you like to be a peer of the realm?"—"Nay," cried Morland, "do not insult my birth by this trifling: "you well know that I have ever suffered my views "to be directed with the utmost modesty."—"A "truce with your modesty," replied the Captain: "in "giving you liberty to choose, it was not my intention "to limit you in your choice. Speak freely: would "you like to be a peer of England?"

Morland, out of patience, and to put an end to the jest, replied, "If you please: by all means a peer, "and do not forget the estate necessary to support "my peerage,"

"Estate!" said the Captain—"Postboy! stop." By this time the chaise had entered a beautiful, picturesque part of the county. Woods, lawns, streams, an undulatory surface, and elegant seats, whose beauties were heightened by the clearness of the sky, and the vivid tints of the season, gave an air of enchantment to the surrounding prospects, that might well raise in Morland a suspicion that he and his guide were at last arrived in Fairy land. "Estate!" continued the Captain,—"you may see several from "this hill. Take your choice. That mansion seems "to me to stand better than any of the others—looks "larger and nobler—Do you think it would suit "you?"—"Exactly," replied Morland, anxious for a conclusion of any sort. "Very well!" said the Captain, gaily, "permit me to kiss your Lordship's "hand—Lord Belmont will no doubt extend his

"goodness to Captain Godfrey, who will in future "honour himself with the title of his governor— "Postboy! drive to Belmont castle."

The postboys obeyed: the chaise seemed to fly. Morland thought that his guide, formerly his father, mother, and aunt by turns, and now his governor, had lost his senses, or that he himself was dreaming.

CHAPTER XVII.

After passing through magnificent gates and beautiful grounds, the chaise stopped at the front door of the mansion. Footmen in superb liveries ran up to the chaise to assist the Captain in alighting; he, however, civilly refused their assistance, pointing to his fellow-traveller, and saying—"Attend to my "Lord:" on which they bowed and offered their arms to Morland, who was not entirely without occasion for them, and who leant on the arm of one of the footmen as far as the hall; where his governor, taking him by the hand, led him through a suite of magnificent apartments, in which there were people attending, who bowed as they passed. They proceeded till they came to an anti-chamber, where a man in plain clothes was sitting, who, on seeing them, rose and came forward. The Captain whispered something to him, and he immediately went through a door which he drew after him, and disappeared.

Morland looked round him with a stupified air. Presently a noise was heard, the folding doors where the man had disappeared were thrown wide open, and a gentleman about fifty years old, with a venerable countenance, wearing the decorations of the order of the garter, appeared advancing to meet

them. As they came up to him he received the Captain affectionately, and looking for some time at Morland, folded him in his arms with an air of delight. "Noble Godfrey," said he, "I am satisfied, "and you shall have reason to be so too: our young "men are here, but for the present carry my Lord "to his apartment, he must stand in need of repose. "Pray let him be dressed, as I wish him to appear "to advantage. I take the liberty of a friend with "him, he will excuse it: I leave him to you till "dinner-time."

Morland, without opening his mouth, followed his governor, who led him to a very handsome room, and put him under the hands of two valets-de-chambre, who immediately began to undress him. They put him on an elegant satin morning gown, and throwing a combing-cloth round his shoulders, soon arranged his hair. They then handed him linen of the finest texture, and completing his whole dress with a very handsome, fashionable suit of clothes, cleared the room, and withdrew.

While Morland was dressing, the Captain sat at a window quietly reading a pamphlet he had taken up by chance. The new Lord standing before a large glass, hardly knew, hardly saw himself.

"How does your Lordship do?" said the Captain. "Is it possible that you take no pleasure in this "happy turn of your affairs, my Lord?" Morland said "that he was certain he was asleep—that it "was all a dream—or," added he, "you have "surrounded me with illusions. In what light am "I to look upon you?"

"These are neither illusions nor dreams, my "Lord," replied the Captain, "and your governor "is not uneasy as to the light in which you are now "to look upon him: however, he advises you to "throw off this air of amazement, which in some

" degree eclipses the advantages that nature has " bestowed upon you. You are about to appear in " the great world: make an effort; assume a little " ease without throwing off your modesty; and till " you are called to more essential trials of virtue, " show yourself worthy, by a modest assurance, of " the rank you have chosen."

Here a servant came to say that dinner was waiting for his Lordship, and the Captain, taking him gaily by the hand, led him to the dining-room, where they found the nobleman to whom Morland had been presented. He advanced in an affectionate manner to his new friend, and taking him by the hand, placed him next to himself. Two young noblemen, about the age of thirty, and Captain Godfrey, made up the rest of the company.

Nothing interesting passed at dinner; but as soon as the cloth was removed, and the servants withdrawn, the nobleman at the top of the table took Morland by the hand, and addressing his two relations, said: " You are not inclined to adopt the " proposition I have made, first to the one, and then " to the other of you, of taking my name, and bear- " ing my arms: now I am unalterably bent on see- " ing my intention realized, while I live; but as you " think you cannot, without injuring your feelings, " and degrading your family, consent to sink your " title in mine, I cease to press you on the subject. " Here is a young man more complying. He will " have the goodness to take care, after me, to pre- " vent this old castle from falling into ruins; and " to perpetuate the humble race of the Earls of " Ashmore."

This speech appeared to astonish the Lords to whom it was addressed. They stared at Morland, who, blushing deeper than the rose, looked like an angel.

"You say nothing—" continued Lord Ashmore —"you ought to know me. You feel only what "affects yourselves: do you think it extraordinary "that I should consider myself?"

"But, my Lord," replied one of the young noblemen, "it is not a usual thing to give away property "from one's relations to indulge a fancy, or to be- "stow a name like yours, a name, in the honours of "which we share, on the first person that comes in "the way."

"First or not," replied the Earl, "I am pleased "with him, I adopt him, and I shall not court any "one's approbation in the choice. However, I have "a proposal to make to you. It is not my inten- "tion to act unjustly, or to dissatisfy my relations. "You know how much of my property I can dis- "pose of, and you, with great propriety, look for a "share; now, if the scheme I have imparted to you "meets your disapprobation, I give the whole to "this young man."

This startled the young Lords, who, almost together, cried out, "your Lordship is to do as you "like; you certainly will be careful of your own "honour; your judgment is unquestionable, we shall "not oppose it."

"That's not enough," replied the Earl; "not "opposing me is not serving me: I have only you "to manage matters for me. I shall have occasion "for interest among men in power, but I do not "choose to apply to any body myself. You, I know, "can do any thing: however, we will talk this busi- "ness over in the library, where I will furnish you "with necessary papers and instructions. But this "is not all—I intend that Lord Belmont shall marry, "and that richly too: he ought to have an establish- "ment, at which neither you nor I may blush; and "if you assist me, it is possible, without trenching

" much upon my fortune, or lessening your just ex-
" pectations in the least."

The young Lords replied that they were entirely devoted to his Lordship. " Your compliance de-
" lights me:"—said Lord Ashmore. " There is a
" lately created Baronet residing in Devonshire, a
" stupid fellow, but a man of very large fortune:
" he has an only daughter who is highly spoken of:
" she is the person I want; but it does not suit me
" to make advances to such a man: nor is it neces-
" sary for you; he is a creature of your friend Lord
" Hallidon's, who could deliver him over to you bound
" hand and foot; now he must give his daughter an
" estate worth seven thousand a-year. These are
" the outlines of my plan; but come, let us now go
" into the library, and I will enter into the particu-
" lars: Captain Godfrey will take care of his pupil."
It is needless to say that they had drunk their wine, and that the two Lords attended their relation. As for Morland, the Captain took him into the park.

They both walked on without speaking. The grounds were beautifully laid out. They came up to a spot where a clump of lofty trees, irregularly disposed, formed one of those pleasant retreats that give variety to the beauties of the English garden. The body of a tree, as if fallen by the wind, offered the only seat. Morland sat down, his hat drawn over his eyes, and his arms folded, like one absorbed in thought.

" Your Lordship appears melancholy," said the Captain. " Have done with Lordship"—said Mor-
land—" I am no Lord, nor will I be one. Even were
" your illusions realities, I should be but robbing
" some other of his fortune, and I would scorn to
" raise myself by such baseness. I am flattered, in-
" toxicated with the sweetest hopes that can touch
" the heart—all to shake my religion: but know,

"it is in vain, it is not to be shaken. Though you "are for ever speaking to me of virtue, you cannot "remove my distrust of you. I own that I feel "myself tenderly attracted towards you; but I con- "sider that attraction as the most dangerous enemy "I have to encounter. In a word, magician, fairy, "spirit, angel, demon, or devil; whoever, or what- "ever you are, make yourself known to me. You "have always known and read my heart, so that I "can have no secret hid from you. You have known "me gentle, flexible, and respectful, but you have "seen in me no pusillanimity, for which I need blush "before you. Throw off this assumed appearance, which cannot belong to you; show yourself to me "what you are; you'll not frighten me. Do this, "or considering myself as your sport, as the quarry "of an infernal spirit, I will fly from you, and at- "tempt every means, even extreme ones, to be de- "livered for ever from you."

"No, no, my son, my dear son," said the sus- pected being, embracing Morland tenderly, "we "shall not part: you shall know me, you shall love "me, you shall be my consolation and my joy."

Morland gazed at the figure before him; the countenance seemed to brighten, the eyes to sparkle, and he stared with breathless awe, expecting some tremendous change while he was yet encircled by the arms of the transmigrating fiend. "No!" cried his embracer, "I am no fairy, magician, spirit, "angel, or demon: look at me. I am not indeed a "man like you;—but I am a being of your species "—I am—a woman—a weak woman—" continued she, pressing him still closer to her bosom—"in "short, Edward, you are in the arms of Marcia "Belmont, the sister of Lord Ashmore, the widow "of Sir Patrick Morland, and your own mother."

"A woman! my mother!" cried Morland, trans-

ported with joy. "Where am I? What have I "done? I have repelled the tender feelings you "inspired, shut my heart against you, nay treated "you with disrespect. Let me kiss your feet."

"You have been guilty of nothing, my son," said Lady Marcia, "in which your mother is not an ac- "complice."—"But how!" cried Morland, looking at his mother with an air of confidence, conviction, and tenderness—"what a chain of wonders! Tell "me how—by what means you have effected them. "All nature seems to obey you."

"My dear Edward," replied Lady Marcia smiling, "it is your *imagination* alone that has obeyed "me. I perceived that I had awakened and asto- "nished it, the first time I saw you, when I was "disguised as a gypsy; a disguise which an accident "that I will explain to you had induced me to take. "*You* were in some danger from which it was ne- "cessary to withdraw you: *I* had still a great deal "to do to fix our fate in life, which was not then "certain. I wished to possess your entire confi- "dence, that I might try you and know you. The "idea of supernatural agency having entered your "mind, I determined to strengthen it, that I might "do as I pleased with you: some luck, a little ad- "dress, and your great simplicity, enabled me to "succeed far beyond my expectation. My views "are now accomplished, and all the marvellous is "at an end. Disguise in future being unnecessary, "you shall know all that concerns me." Morland thanked and embraced his mother.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The history of Lady Marcia Belmont.

THE elegant and accomplished Lady Marcia Morland and her son being pleasantly seated on the trunk of the tree in the grove, she began in the following manner:

"In time you will make yourself acquainted with "the history of our house: it is noble and ancient, "but that's no merit of ours; we must be careful "not to pride ourselves upon it, for pride tarnishes "the lustre of reflected merit.

"I am the daughter of Edward, the late Earl of "Ashmore, and Lady Sarah Beverley, whose mar"riage was blessed with six children. The eldest "you know, the present Earl of Ashmore, the se"cond is Lady Hewley; she was followed by William, "now Bishop of Frome; then a brother whom we "lost young; Edward who died in battle, whose "memory I cherish warmly, was the next; and I am "the youngest of the family.

"By the death of my father all the family estates "descended to my eldest brother. My mother's "fortune was to supply the portions of the rest, and "we found ourselves reduced to slender pittances. "My father having a distinguished place at court, "continued to live there after my mother, who "early became infirm, retired to this place. My "brother was sent to a foreign university to com"plete his education, after which he visited the "different courts of Europe, and returned to Eng"land when he was five-and-twenty. I saw him "then for the first time. He was not long with us "at Belmont-castle, for my father, being desirous of "placing him at court, kept him in London; so that

"I hardly saw any thing of him. The Bishop of "Frome was little more than a boy, when he was "sent to Oxford. About the same time Lord Hew- "ley courted my sister, and afterwards married her.

"I was thirteen years younger than my sister. "When Lord Hewley saw me, he took a fancy to "me, and was on the point of changing his object, "when my sister exerted herself, and found means "to fix him. I was too young to have any design, "and had done nothing to attract him; I therefore "saw him, without regret, resume his first attach- "ment, but my sister considered me as her rival, "and never forgave it.

"My youngest brother died while he was at West- "minster school. Edward had a commission in the "guards, and, except the time his duty allowed him "to spend with us, I was left entirely alone with my "mother, who was confined to her chamber, and "the retirement in which I lived became very irk- "some to me.

"I did nothing but read romances all day long, "which increased my distaste for a retired life, in- "spired a curiosity to become acquainted with "things of no use to me, awakened in me the seeds "of a passion fatal to my peace, and gave me false "ideas of men, of the world, and of nature in "general.

"A joke of my brother Edward's gave me a taste "for an amusement still more dangerous. I was "much about his size, and in the face we were ex- "tremely alike. He took it into his head one day "to make me try on his regimentals—you see I still "have men's clothes on. Edward was delighted "with my appearance, and being left entirely to "ourselves, he determined to have a suit made to "fit me exactly. As soon as it came home, I went "with him to many of the neighbouring families,

" and passed undiscovered. I was taken for my " youngest brother, whose death was either unknown " or forgotten. This success encouraged me, and " by continuing to disguise myself in a male dress, " I acquired the bold, natural look, and carriage of " a young man. I learned to manage a horse ex- " pertly, and, taking lessons from my brother's man, " who had been a fencing-master at Paris, I ac- " quired great skill in the use of the small-sword. " All my mornings were employed in these exer- " cises, and I scarcely flung on my own clothes to " go to my mother's chamber. In addition to these " extraordinary frolics, I took a fancy for driving, " and my whole time was filled up with occupations " little becoming my sex.

" When Edward went to London, my fencing, " riding, and driving, were suspended, but this only " increased my passion for them. I was impatient " for his return, to renew my favourite amusements, " nor was he backward in indulging me. On ob- " taining fresh leave, he returned with Sir Patrick " Morland, an officer of the same regiment. His " friend was a younger son of an ancient and dis- " tinguished Irish family, but poor. He was about " thirty years old: his person was handsome, noble, " and prepossessing; and his conversation agreeable, " ingenious, and insinuating. Edward had a great " regard for him, and made him of all our parties.

" Sir Patrick took pains to render himself agree- " able to me, and did not find it difficult to succeed: " I had not been put upon my guard. He declared " a passion for me very freely, which I treated ca- " valierly: my dress gave me boldness, and inspired " it in him. I had but one way of opposing his at- " tacks, which was, that our fortune ought not to " suffer us to think of each other. I knew the pre- " judices of my father, and of my eldest brother

" against the Irish; but it was impossible, with com-
" mon decency, to give this as a reason, and which
" my own heart but too readily disavowed. Sir
" Patrick pleading excess of passion, was not re-
" pulsed by so feeble a defence. He redoubled his
" ardour, and persisted in his assiduities at Belmont
" castle, both when my brother was here, and when
" he was not; till finding that he made no progress,
" in convincing my understanding, he made use of
" means, unworthy a man of honour, to make it
" necessary for *me* to sue for *his* hand.

" While this was going on, my brother Edward
" had quitted the guards, being made colonel of a
" regiment going on service, at the head of which
" he soon after fell. His death affected my father
" extremely, and, age and affliction uniting, carried
" him to the grave, whither he was soon followed
" by my poor mother, who had been languishing for
" many years. Lady Hewley and my second brother,
" then a doctor of divinity at Oxford, came to at-
" tend her in her last illness, while the new Earl of
" Ashmore took his seat in the House of Peers.

" My conduct, hitherto little inspected, was now
" soon known to my relations. I had lost in Ed-
" ward the only friend, the only protector on whom
" I could depend among my own connections. Some
" of the old servants, zealous in their duty, or sup-
" posing themselves so, informed Lady Hewley of
" all the particulars of my intercourse with Sir
" Patrick, which our indiscretion had made them
" acquainted with.

" I was, however, of age, and, our affairs being
" arranged soon after my father's death, seven thou-
" sand pounds stock, the amount of my portion, had
" been regularly transferred to me. I was apprized
" that Lord Ashmore had been sent for, and was
" soon expected at Belmont-castle, and that his

" Countess accompanied him. Lady Ashmore re-
" sembled Lady Hewley in disposition, and was
" very much attached to her. Dreading to see my
" family all joining against me, I resolved to set off
" secretly for London in quest of Sir Patrick, the
" possession of my liberty and fortune allowing me
" to become his wife without asking a consent which
" I knew would be refused.

" A servant in whom I confided got horses ready
" for me, and putting up a few things in a portman-
" teau, I set out dressed as a man. As such I might
" appear in the eyes of others, but so long a jour-
" ney, and the inconveniency attending an advanced
" state of pregnancy, made me but too sensible that
" I was a woman.

" Sir Patrick lodged in Piccadilly. I surprised
" him early one morning in the apartment he occu-
" pied. It was indeed a surprise to him. His
" views agreed not with mine. I saw it the moment
" I entered. Far from receiving me with ardour,
" he was embarrassed and constrained. Supposing
" him unacquainted with the state of my affairs, I
" informed him of every particular, and of our re-
" sources. He appeared still more thoughtful, more
" cold. I urged him on the score of humanity, I
" endeavoured to rouse him by an appeal to honour;
" but this only provoked irony and insult. Con-
" ceiving that the spirit of a soldier, which I dis-
" played, was ill suited to the solemn alliance I
" came to propose, I dropped the tone I had incon-
" siderately taken, and falling at his feet, I conjured
" him to take pity on his child, to which I was about
" to give birth. He pushed me from him. Com-
" manding myself, while determined to be revenged,
" I rose and left him, apparently in consternation,
" but really with rage and vengeance at my heart.

" I concealed myself at a furnished lodging near

" Sir Patrick's, and employed my servant to trace
" him to his haunts, and discover his pursuits. I
" soon learned that he was courting the widow of a
" rich citizen; that he had given up his old ac-
" quaintance, and devoted all his time to her. She
" had deserted the soil of her late husband's har-
" vests, abandoned the chilly East for the balmy
" West, let her house in Bishopsgate-street, and
" purchased a villa near Kensington. Here Sir
" Patrick usually spent the day, returning at night
" alone, and without caution, to his lodgings in
" Piccadilly. I summoned all my resolution, and
" determined to attack him. I laid in wait on the
" road for him. The patroles were off, the watch-
" men were asleep. At two in the morning, not far
" from Hyde Park corner, I saw him at a distance
" coming. I advanced to meet him. There was
" sufficient light for us to know each other. Vil-
" lain! said I, you shall do me justice. He answered
" me with a taunt, and tried to pass me; but I pre-
" sented my sword to his breast. Compelled to
" draw his, he called out, and retreated, defending
" himself. I pushed vigorously; he only parried.
" At last I wounded him, on which he became furi-
" ous, and began to assault me in his turn: making
" an attempt to disarm me, he ran upon my sword,
" and received a mortal wound. He fell, saying,
" ' Ah! Marcia, you have killed me!' This brought
" me to myself. ' Good heavens!' cried I: ' wretch-
" ed creature! what have I done?'—' You have re-
" venged yourself, Marcia,' replied he, ' and justly
" —I forgive you—fly, take care of yourself.'—' No,
" my dear Sir Patrick,' said I, ' I will take care of
" you; your wound may not be mortal, heaven send
" it may not! As for me, I care not for my life;
" but I may be perfectly safe in appearing as your
" friend.'

"I ran for assistance, and bringing a chair, at-
"tended Sir Patrick home to his lodgings. While
"his servant was employed in putting him to bed,
"and stopping the blood, I hastened for a surgeon.
"I soon returned with one of the most skilful in
"town, who, on examining the wound, pronounced
"it extremely dangerous, if not mortal. I wished
"to remain in the room all night, but Sir Patrick
"having had his wound dressed, entreated me to go
"and rest, and to come to him in the morning, in
"clothes suitable to my sex, adding, 'heaven grant
"I may have time to repair the wrongs of which
"you have such reason to complain.'

"The consequences of this hope to you, my son,
"had an immediate effect upon me; I retired to
"prepare myself, and, having put on proper apparel,
"I repaired very early in the morning to Sir Pa-
"trick's apartments. Sir Patrick had already as-
"sembled a clergyman, two lawyers, and two of his
"friends: every thing, in short, was ready for our
"marriage; the landlord of the house, and a rela-
"tion of his wife's, came in to be witnesses; and the
"ceremony was performed with every precaution
"requisite to its validity.

"Your father, Edward, was mortally wounded—
"and by my hand—he was dear to me——I will
"spare you the pain of hearing, and myself the
"pang of repeating the manner in which the inter-
"val was passed between our union and the sad
"moment of our separation, which took place eight
"days after. I paid him the mournful duties of a
"widow, quitted the neighbourhood of Piccadilly,
"and took a small apartment in Westminster, till you
"were born. I had sent my faithful servant into Dor-
"setshire, to get information how my family were af-
"fected by my flight. They were all leagued against
"me; nothing but violence was heard. The doctor

" partook the feelings of Lady Hewley; Lady Ash-
" more joined them, and the three together exas-
" perated my eldest brother.

" I had a great esteem for my brother, but I
" dreaded his prejudices and passionate temper. I
" felt the necessity of keeping at a distance from my
" family, of skreening my situation from my sister's
" hatred, and of seeking an asylum where I might
" live in peace, and at ease, on the small fortune of
" which I was mistress.

" Such an asylum I could not expect to find in
" London, where every thing is so dear, on the in-
" terest of my funds. I might retire to a distant
" county, or go and live in France. I wavered for
" some time between these two plans, but at last my
" taste and habits decided my choice. To have
" lived in England I must have submitted to the
" usual occupations and conduct of women, or by
" gaining the character of singularity have relin-
" quished the countenance of persons among whom
" I resided. By going over to France in my men's
" clothes, I got out of the way of those whom I
" wished to avoid, I escaped from every kind of
" constraint, and I in a manner doubled my income
" in acquiring my liberty. This scene seduced my
" imagination, and I determined to put it into exe-
" cution.

" The time for your birth arrived. Of all the
" friends of my family, the only one with whom I
" preserved any connexion was Mr. Holt, a banker
" in the city, who was acquainted with my adven-
" tures. He stood godfather for you, and your
" birth and christening were regularly registered at
" St. Margaret's, Westminster.

" You were nursed in a country house of Mr.
" Holt's, and afterwards put under the care of a
" worthy woman whose name was Waller, recom-

" mended by him. Though the greatest care was " taken to conceal who you were, yet it was not " thought necessary to change your name; it is " well known both in England and Ireland, but as " there are many branches of the Morlands, you " would naturally pass undistinguished. This cau- " tion was suggested by Mr. Holt to leave no room " whatever for a doubt of your birth. Both my " family and your father's were provided with heirs " in succession, by whom you were at that time de- " prived of all hope of a better fortune; but I " anxiously looked forward to future resources for " you; and in order to leave no ground for intrigues " that might have deprived you of them, I left every " body ignorant of your fate and mine.

" Having taken care of every thing respecting " you, and recommended you in the most earnest " manner to Mr. Holt, I constituted him my agent, " entrusted him with my designs and plans, and " embarked for France *as a man*.

" I long wandered about from town to town on " the sea coasts of the kingdom, without being able " to settle in any: at length the situation of Mar- " seilles pleased me, and there I fixed. The lan- " guage and customs of the country soon became " familiar to me. I liked dissipation, and it was " necessary for me. Thrown as I was, in every re- " spect, out of my sphere, I found it requisite to " shun thoughts that led to a retrospect. I formed " no particular connexion; I was afraid of the " French levity: it did not suit me to make a friend " of a man, and I found the women very insipid. I " returned to my former pleasures, I kept horses " and dogs; but finding that those expensive whims " trenched too deeply on my little income, I sought " resources in the arts, in books, in the company of " men of letters, and in public amusements. It was

" in this new circle of pursuits that I first felt a
" strong desire to see Paris, whither I afterwards
" went. There I found every thing that could gra-
" tify the new inclination of my mind, as well as my
" old propensities. Schools for all the personal ex-
" ercises, and courses of instruction in all the
" sciences, furnished sufficient occupation for the
" whole day, and public places of entertainment
" filled up the void of the evening. Returning home
" at night I soon fell into sound sleep, for which the
" fatigue of the day prepared me. I had taken the
" name of Godfrey, which I have kept to this day.

" In the academies which I frequented I met many
" of my young countrymen; but, in order to study
" them more at my ease, I did not let them know
" that I was an Englishman: from the Provençal
" dialect, which I then spoke, they took me for a
" native of Provence. Our intercourse was cold
" and distant. Not being suspected of understand-
" ing their language, they talked freely before me,
" and I one day heard some of them ridiculing one
" of their fellow-students so unjustly, and with such
" little manners, that I felt a great inclination to
" take his part. They were condemning in him as
" a fault what every reasonable being would have
" applauded as an amiable conduct. Modest, mild,
" polite, and grateful, he was speaking well of the
" French in general on account of the kind recep-
" tion he had himself met from individuals, and of
" some little services they had done him. He main-
" tained that it was not right to insult people in
" their own country, where foreigners were never
" insulted; and declared, for his own part, that he
" saw no reason for thinking ill of the French. He
" failed to convince; his company left him, and he
" remained alone with me. His name was Lloyd,
" and he was a Welchman. When they were gone,

" I accosted him, and spoke such good English as " might well surprise him. I owned myself to be " his countryman, and gloried at the same time, in " thinking as he did. In short, my son, the result " of our conversation was, that we became friends, " and were almost inseparable. We shall continue " so through life. Never was there a gentler, " truer, tenderer soul than Lloyd's. I could tell " you a thousand excellent traits of his character; " but you will be acquainted with him, and be able to " judge for yourself. You already stand indebted " to him for several indirect obligations, and when " you see him again, you will remember his per- " son.

" With love I had been acquainted, had had no " great reason to boast of it, and felt no inclination " to renew my acquaintance with it; but I now " yielded my heart to friendship with all the " warmth of which it was susceptible. Lloyd, not " very rich, and having spent on his education a " greater sum than he could reasonably sacrifice, " was obliged to return home, and I determined to " accompany him.

" We went to London, where I saw Mr. " Holt, and received favourable accounts of you. " Your gentleness and application to your studies " were highly spoken of, and I consulted with the " worthy banker respecting a profession for you. " There was no change in the state of the family, " my resources were not improved, and your con- " stitution was delicate: these considerations deter- " mined me to send you to Oxford, and to educate " you for the church.

" After a short stay in London, Lloyd set out for " Wales, whither I accompanied him. His property " was small, and out of it, too, a considerable por- " tion was devoted by him to the support of his mo-

" ther, a respectable old woman. We were not " very much at our ease, but a friend supplies the " place of many things. I spent six months with " him without being tired, amusing myself with de- " stroying the foxes that infested his estates. I " then returned to France, determining in future to " visit Wales every year.

" Notwithstanding this determination, two years " passed before I went again, and I then found Lloyd " in a state of uneasiness and embarrassment. He " was in love with the eldest daughter of Mrs. Ap- " Owen, whom you know, then not quite sixteen " years old. He dared not declare his passion either " to the girl, whose name is Winifred, or to her mo- " ther, or indeed speak of it to any body, on ac- " count of very unfavourable circumstances existing " at the time. Mrs. Ap-Owen had just lost her " husband, and the little property left by him was " mortgaged to a Jew of a fellow, for two hundred " pounds. This man pressed for payment; the fa- " mily were in great affliction, and on the point of " ruin. My friend Lloyd had it not in his power to " prevent it, and to think of marriage in so forlorn " a state was impossible. Even supposing Mrs. Ap- " Owen's property clear, it would have been impru- " dent to think of it. I persuaded my friend to " postpone the declaration of his sentiments till hap- " pier times, and having resolved to pass the whole " year with him, I gave up the greater part of my " income for that time to retrieve this worthy, un- " fortunate family. I wished Lloyd to be the osten- " sible person in this little service; but he betrayed " me to Mrs. Ap-Owen, whence arose the connexion " that has been ever since kept up.

" Having completed the year in Wales, I return- " ed to Paris. All Europe was at peace, and ap- " peared likely to be long in a tranquil state. I had

" formed an acquaintance with an officer in the corps " of mousquetaires, of the name of Fitzmartin, who " was descended from a good family in Ireland. " Conceiving me to be attached to France, he said " that he wondered, young as I appeared to be, that " I had never thought of entering into the army, " which was in his opinion the only profession fit " for a gentleman. He, with only fifteen hundred " livres for his pay, was living agreeably, and in " hopes of promotion.

" Tired with the life I was leading, I took it into " my head to be a mousquetaire, and Fitzmartin " presented me to his Commander, as belonging to " a family who had followed the fortune of the " Stuarts.

" I was approved and accepted. I was now " mounted on horseback again, but professionally. " I frequently went to Versailles, where my fond- " ness for the chace revived. Whenever the King " hunted a stag he was sure to see me in the chace, " or at the death, till at last I was noticed. One " day, coming rather too late to see the stag at " bay, the King, no doubt, accustomed to the sight " of me, said, loud enough for me to hear: ' Ah! " here's my mousquetaire!' Flattered to have at- " tracted this distinction, I endeavoured to push " myself more and more into notice, till, having " gradually increased my stud and my establish- " ment, I received a letter from Mr. Holt, remind- " ing me that by exceeding my income I was hurting " my capital. On this I resolved to retire, and to " go and stay some time with my friends in Wales; " and, obtaining leave of absence, I left Versailles.

" While I was living with Lloyd the war with " Spain broke out, and it was confidently said by " the ablest politicians that France would soon take " part in it. I really loved the King, but I could

" not think of serving against my country, and I " sent my resignation to the colonel of my regi- " ment.

" At that time Sir Thomas Colville was raising a " free company, to go with Commodore Anson on " his expedition to the South Seas. He knew me " in France, and offered me a lieutenancy in his " company, which I accepted. By taking this " commission I had it in my power to nurse our " little fortune, and perhaps to increase it.

" In the course of the life I had thus led I saw " you several times at Reading, but with the ut- " most caution and self-command, in order to pre- " vent the possibility of divulging my secret before " the proper time. You were then growing a big " boy, and lest you should observe me too particu- " larly, or I be unable to restrain my feelings, I did " not even shake hands with you the last time I left " you. I once more recommended you to the good " Mr. Holt, and embarked on board the commo- " dore's ship, with a detachment of a hundred and " fifty men under my command. I shall say no- " thing to you of the expedition, in which you are " at present nowise interested, except in the fortune " I have acquired by it.

" After four years absence and extraordinary ad- " ventures, there returned to England of this squa- " dron, consisting, at first, of five ships, but a small " number of the adventurers, on board a shattered " vessel full of treasure, and of that number I had " the good fortune to be one. We owed our pre- " servation to the fertile genius under whose com- " mand we were, and to dame Fortune, who steered us " safely to port through the middle of an enemy's " fleet in a fog. Sir Thomas Colville was dead, " and I had succeeded to the command of the whole " corps, the complement of which at our departure

" was five hundred men, reduced before our arrival " to thirty-six.

" I no sooner landed than I set out for London, " and flew to Mr. Holt, who now in his seventieth " year, had lost his faculties, and was become quite a " child. In consequence of an application lately made " to the chancellor, his affairs had been put in trust, " and my funds were safe. I applied to the trus- " tees for my papers, but no inventory had yet " been made, and not a soul could tell me any thing " of my poor Edward.

" Engaged to deliver in an account of my com- " pany, and to take steps for their interest, prepa- " ratory to the division of the prizes taken by the " squadron, I could not leave London immediately. " I wrote to Mrs. Waller, but received no answer. " I sent a second and a third letter without more " success. Being extremely uneasy, I applied to " the Lords of the Admiralty for permission to leave " town; but being constantly wanted, having ren- " dered myself necessary to them, they could not " grant it. I then wrote to my friend Lloyd, con- " juring him to come to me, as I had the greatest " occasion for his assistance. Alas! his mother was " dying, and he could not leave her. My situation " was desperate: if I deserted my duty, I ran a risk " of losing the fortune I had amassed for you with " so much fatigue and danger, and on the other " hand, I felt a dread of having lost you for ever.

" Notwithstanding this state of alarm, the hope " of seeing you assume a rank suitable to your " name induced me to seek the head of our family. " Lord Ashmore, I knew, was in London. He had " lately lost his only son, Lord Belmont, whose " death almost distracted him. This news my ser- " vant heard from his. His two daughters were " married three years before, the one to Lord Mor-

" ris, and the other to Lord Evelyn: he was ne-
" glected by his family, and almost left to himself.
" He had quitted his house in town, where Lord Bel-
" mont died, and had taken a ready-furnished apart-
" ment in Southampton-street. The rooms above his
" happening to be vacant, I took them. I had no
" fear of his knowing my person: for, besides that I
" knew him to be inattentive, my regimentals and
" actual rank secured me from every suspicion. It
" was my wish that chance should bring us toge-
" ther, and interest him for me; I loved and esteem-
" ed him, but feared him still more; by choosing an
" improper time, by making myself known to him
" at a moment when he was ill-disposed to such a
" discovery, might have overturned my scheme for
" ever.

" I made myself acquainted with his habits.
" When the parliament was not sitting, he spent his
" mornings in concerting plans for the promotion
" of the public good, and in studying the fluctuation
" of the funds, in which he employed brokers to buy
" and sell for him; in the evening he constantly
" went to the play, thence to a coffee-house, where
" he sat pensive for some time, and then went home
" about twelve. As soon as my business allowed
" me, I followed him every where, taking precau-
" tions to prevent his suspecting me.

" Here, my dear Edward, let me give you some
" idea of your uncle's character. He is one of the
" worthiest, and at the same time one of the most
" singular men in England. Your grandfather would
" fain have made a courtier of him, and did keep
" him at court as long as he lived: but when he be-
" came independent, he had no sooner taken his
" seat in the House of Lords than he rejected every
" overture, and refused every favour. On his estates
" in the country, he encourages agriculture to a

" very great extent, economizes his fortune, and is " the best of masters. To his poor tenants and the " unfortunate in general his charity is unbounded. " In London he encourages commerce, interests " himself in the establishment of manufactures, " watches the management of the public funds, and " acts the part of a man of business. His conduct " in parliament is guided by the best motives; he is " inaccessible to every kind of intrigue: but, though " unswayed by the ministry, he never thwarts their " measures, unless he suspects them to be prejudicial " to the public welfare. He keeps aloof from the " leaders in the House of Commons, and by this in- " flexibility of character becomes useless where he " might be serviceable. He has many other pecu- " liarities, I may say whims; but you will know them by " the circumstances I have to relate. On the whole, " Heaven grant that you may resemble him in recti- " tude and benevolence!

" I had taken pains, for a fortnight, to keep him " in sight to no purpose, when one evening, instead " of going to the theatre, which overflowed, I stayed " at the coffee-house he frequented. Three ill- " looking men, sitting at a little distance from me, and " talking together in a low voice, mentioned him. " Leaning my head on my hand, in deep thought, " I might well be supposed sleeping. The name " of Ashmore drew my attention, and I listened at- " tentively, without changing my posture.

" 'He dined at the hotel,' said one of them, 'with " such and such persons: I know he employed three " brokers—Bradshaw himself told me that he sold " out fifty thousand pounds for him.'—'He shall " turn it to good account;' said one of the others. I " lost the rest of the conversation, and they removed " to a less exposed situation to consider their designs

" When the play was over, Lord Ashmore,

" came in as usual, in a plain great coat, ordered
" some warm negus, and sat down. The three
" rogues were gone. Between eleven and twelve
" my Lord sent for a chair, in which he went away.
" He had no servant, and I followed him, but at a
" little distance. Turning the corner of Covent-
" Garden into Southampton-Street, the chair was
" stopped; I immediately drew my sword and ran
" up. The villains were at the door: seeing me,
" one of them came up to me with his sword raised;
" I ran him through the body in an instant, and
" left him on the pavement. I rushed forward to
" attack the others, but hearing the cries of their
" associate, they fled. I found my Lord calling and
" struggling to get out of the chair, deserted by
" the chairman, who, I have no doubt, were ac-
" complices in the villany. I helped him out, and
" supporting him by the arm, walked home to his
" apartments.

" I still held my sword, stained with blood, in my
" hand, and entering the house, desired the land-
" lord to go and give the alarm. Lord Ashmore,
" still agitated with the thoughts of his dan-
" ger, said nothing: two footmen came to light
" him; he leaned upon their arms, and I followed
" him to his apartment.

" He sat down, then looking full at me:—' Ah!
" Captain,' said he, ' is it you? My brave fellow-
" lodger, you have rendered me a service beyond
" my power to estimate. It was my pocket-book
" the villains wanted—there it is—it contains only
" fifty thousand pounds, which you have saved from
" robbers.' I wished to have said I thought myself
" but too happy in having been in the way; how-
" ever, he went on speaking—' You have not fought
" for nothing: you shall find it was for yourself, as
" well as for me. The pocket-book is ours, and

" you shall take what you please of it. Do not be " afraid that I shall think you unreasonable.'

" I did not even look at the pocket-book. I was " in company with a brother, whose friendship I " would have purchased with every drop of my " blood. I was still in amazement at the danger he " had escaped. The embarrassment of my situa- " tion, remorse for my past conduct so unworthy " of him, and the desire of discovering myself, " of falling at his feet, of asking his affection " both for you and for myself, all agitated me at " once.

" My Lord, surprised at my look, after a mo- " ment's silence, said to me: ' What's the matter, " Captain? Do you doubt my being noble enough " to give you twenty or thirty thousand pounds for " saving my life?'

" ' No, my Lord,' replied I, ' I know your gene- " rosity. Zeal and an affection of which you know " not the cause have impelled me to do you a ser- " vice which you appear to value, I aspire to a more " flattering reward; to your friendship—'

" ' My friendship!' replied he, ' and who are you? " You are just returned from the other side of the " globe. Were we ever known to each other? I " think I have seen your face before—Are you an " Englishman?'

" I knew not what to say: I trembled as he ex- " amined my features—there was something stern " and harsh in his countenance.

" ' Answer me,' continued he. ' No, my Lord,' " I said, greatly agitated, ' I am—French.'

" ' I thought so,' replied he, ' from your pronun- " ciation and gait. My friendship to a French- " man! to an enemy of my country! Go, I'll for- " give your being whatever you will, if you will " take the contents of my pocket-book.'

" ' No, my Lord,' said I, ' I have a soul above
" selling service for money.'

" ' You will not have money!' said he, as if
" angry— ' and what will you have then? What has
" driven you from your own country, and why are
" you in our service? Speak—has any thing gone
" wrong with you? I will, if it is necessary, make in-
" terest for you; I will get you recommended to the
" ministers, or to your own king; I would endeavour
" to save you from hell, if you have done any thing
" that is likely to carry you there.'

" ' My Lord,' replied I, ' I serve England through
" affection, and will not leave it. I have nothing to
" expect from France, nor have I committed any
" act which makes me amenable to justice; I beg
" therefore that you will employ your interest else-
" where.'

" ' You intend, then, to continue in our service,'
" said his Lordship; ' the brave action you have
" performed shows you to have a noble spirit, and
" your contempt for money is a proof that you are
" no traitor: I will engage my friends to apply for
" promotion for you.'

" ' Once more,' replied I, ' I beg to say, that I
" have had the happiness to be of use to you; I
" have told you the return that suits me, and I will
" accept no other—'

" ' What!' cried he, ' you have determined to be
" my friend—but how if I *cannot* love you! I love
" nobody, not even my children. No, no—you shall
" not leave this room till you tell me what I shall do
" for you.'

" ' At all events, my Lord,' said I, ' I cannot tell
" you now.'—'What time,' replied he, ' do you wish
" to take?' I answered, a month. ' Then,' said he,
" ' you must come to me at Belmont-Castle, for I
" shall then be there. Take this ring, and whether

" you come yourself, or send another person, let " it be brought to me.'

" I promised obedience, and leaving Lord Ash- " more, retired to my own apartments. The next " day, his Lordship removed to a street near St. " James's park.

" My anxiety about you became greater and great- " er, and I was almost driven to despair, when I was " surprised by the arrival of my friend Lloyd in " mourning. His mother was dead, and as he was " apprized by my letters of the occasion I had " for him, he had set out as soon as he could to " come to me. All my business now was likely " to be completed in four or five days, but I was " too impatient to wait, and I immediately dispatch- " ed Lloyd, charging him to see Mrs. Waller, and " bring me positive tidings of a young man entrusted " to her care in whom I took the greatest interest. " Lloyd set out on his commission. I worked in- " cessantly to finish my business. The amount of " the treasure brought home by Commodore Anson " was ascertained: my share was upwards of forty " thousand pounds, besides eighteen hundred due " for pay in arrear. I received these sums, and " added them to my little fortune in the funds, and I " saw justice done to all the men who returned un- " der my command.

" Lloyd soon brought me an account of Mrs. " Waller's death, of your quitting Oxford, your " journey into Devonshire, and admittance into Sir " Robert Wallingford's family, particulars which he " learned from the curate of Reading. Judge, my " dear Edward, of the horror I felt on hearing the " sad state to which my absence, Mrs. Waller's death, " and the infirmity of our poor old friend Holt, had " reduced you.

" Now at liberty to go in search of you myself, I

" put up some clothes and set out, accompanied by
" Lloyd, for Devonshire. We never stopped till we
" came to the village near Crayhill, where we alight-
" ed at the public-house, to get intelligence. I per-
" ceived a bustle throughout the village, in which I
" had no suspicion of your being concerned. The
" landlady of the house had been Lady Wallingford's
" nurse. Several people ran in and out of the inn,
" and I heard the name of Edward mentioned. See-
" ing a knot of people speaking very eagerly, I went
" up and asked what had happened to this Edward.
" Some said that he had seduced, others that he had in-
" sulted the daughter of Sir Robert, had fled, and was
" pursued by her father and his people on horseback.
" I took Lloyd aside, and explaining the matter to
" him, we mounted our horses, and rode along the
" park palings to look for you. We had learned that
" you were in livery, from which and your youth it
" would be easy to know you. Lloyd and I parted
" to search different ways, and agreed that which
" ever of us found you, should carry you to a small
" farm called Stoney-ridge, at a little distance from
" Crayhill, where we had left our things and taken
" saddle horses.

" I had made an acquaintance with the woman
" who held the farm, whose name was Rowe, and it
" was settled that we should meet at her house at
" night, whether successful in our search or not.

" I cannot express to you how anxious I was. On
" the road which I took I every now and then met Sir
" Robert's emissaries scouring the country. Had they
" caught you, I would have rescued you at the peril
" of my life. I passed the whole day lurking about
" Crayhill, to observe whether you might be taken
" to the house by any of the ways leading to it; and
" when night came on I went to my rendezvous at
" Stoney-ridge, where I found Lloyd alone. I was

"wretched at not seeing you with him. 'Do not "be dispirited, my friend,' said he; 'for though "the youth is not here, I have managed matters so "that Sir Robert's people will not be able to find "him, and I know pretty nearly the road he has "taken. About two o'clock I fell in with a country- "man at the distance of four miles from Crayhill, "and describing our youth, asked if he had seen him "pass. He showed me the road he had taken, and "that whence he came. I should have immediately "followed, had not I perceived two men well mount- "ed coming towards us, whom I suspected to be Sir "Robert's scouts, and perhaps himself.

"'I gave the countryman a guinea, and promised "him two more, if on being questioned by them he "said that the person they were in search of was "riding a bay poney barebacked, as fast as he could "gallop, on the road I pointed out to him: mean- "while I dismounted, and seemed to be tightening "the girts of my saddle.

"'The horsemen came up, the questions and an- "swer were such as I had foreseen and arranged, and "Sir Robert's people galloped off on their false scent. "I would then fain have proceeded in my own pur- "suit; but after paying him the other two guineas, I "thought it best to keep him in sight for some time. "I saw more horsemen about the country, and the "man in the hope of greater reward might have "given them the real direction. I staid till the day "was closing in, and then being afraid of losing my "way to Stoney-ridge I came on, satisfied with be- "ing able to inform you of the success I had had.'

"Next morning we rose by daylight, and again "took different roads. He went to the inn near "Crayhill, where he was to wait till he heard from "me, get information of what was passing at Sir "Robert's, and if you were taken to go immediately

" and demand you as belonging to one of the noblest " families in England: if refused, to insist upon your " being taken to a justice of the peace, to offer, if " necessary, any security for you, and to stay with " you till it was regularly taken.

" On my side, I pursued the direction Lloyd had " given me; but coming to a cross road I followed " one that carried me away from you, and I returned " at night fatigued to Stoney-ridge, where every thing " was in disorder. The farmer had been arrested and " carried to prison, and his goods seized. I had no " bed to lie upon. I went to the barn, and threw my- " self down on a bundle of straw. Five or six gyp- " sies, who had for several days been roving through " that part of the country, had taken their night's " lodging in the barn. I could not sleep: my " thoughts were employed on the means of finding " you, without its being known. It came into my mind " that as you did not know me, you might from my " dress suspect me, and be induced to conceal your- " self from me as well as others of my appearance, " on which it struck me to disguise myself like a " gypsy: by which means I might go to all the houses " in the country, and be able to make every inquiry. " You know of what use it proved to me. The very " next day in telling an old woman's fortune I learned " my own, and that I should find you at Dame Ship- " ley's. I was now anxious to get you away, with- " out creating a bustle, and to put an end to that " occasioned by your adventure with Matilda, of " the particulars of which I was ignorant.

" I arrived at the little farm where you were, with " my plan all arranged. I dressed you as a girl, in- " vented a story, and persuaded the family into a " belief of it, which you completely confirmed. Hav- " ing prepared them for the arrival of your father

"Mr. Forrester, I returned to Stoney-ridge, where "I changed my gypsy dress, and then went to join "Lloyd at the inn.

"I had a great deal of business on my hands. I "wished to know Matilda, and what had passed be- "tween you. She was reported to be one of the "richest heiresses in the kingdom, and every body "spoke highly of her. If she loved you, and I found "her worthy of you, it was my intention to plan a "match between you: but how was I to gain access "to her? Sir Robert and Lady Wallingford had "left Crayhill. Your mistress still remained there "in charge of Mrs. Johnson, a religious, charitable, "unsuspecting woman; it was necessary to have "some excuse for presenting myself, and the follow- "ing occurred to me.

"At Exeter I purchased a suit of black clothes, "and having dressed myself in them returned to "Crayhill, where I sent in my name to Mrs. John- "son, as a clergyman who wished to converse with "her on a particular circumstance, and was instantly "admitted. I told her that I came to speak to her "respecting a very lamentable case; that poor Rowe "the farmer of Stoney-ridge had been sent to gaol, "and that his goods had been seized by Sir Robert's "steward for fifty pounds; that one of my parish- "ioners induced by pity, and perhaps by some de- "gree of remorse, had placed in my hand a sufficient "sum to pay the debt, but that, whatever motive he "had for acting as he did, he wished that neither "Rowe nor Sir Robert's steward should know by "whom the money was advanced; that if she would "have the kindness to appear as the benefactress of "the poor farmer, every view would be accomplish- "ed; that from her known charitable disposition nei- "ther Rowe nor any body else would be surprised,

" and the steward would not have to boast of the " payment of the rent as the consequence of his " harshness in enforcing the laws against the debtors " of his employer.

" My clothes, my behaviour, my offer, and my " discourse, had the desired effect. Mrs. Johnson " readily joined in so good an action, and lamented " that she had not known the circumstance in time " to have done it really herself. She was going to " dinner alone, and invited me to partake of it. The " good lady was unhappy, and longed to relieve her " mind by conversation. The cloth I wore, and the " message I had brought her, were suited to gain her " confidence, and as I laid myself out for it, we both " soon obtained our views; she in speaking to me of " her niece, and I in hearing all she had to say. I " calmed her apprehensions as well as I could as to " the consequences of the affair: she assured me " that Matilda was innocent, and I assured her that " that innocence would appear. I told her that a friend " of mine of the county of Kent had met with a much " more serious misfortune; that his only daughter, " handsome, amiable, and accomplished, had left his " house, and that he had been seeking for her in " vain for six months past. The story passed, which " was all I wanted.

" Soon after a servant came and told Mrs. John- " son that Miss Wallingford would not take her soup. " ' The poor child will starve herself to death,' said " the worthy aunt, ' she eats nothing: I cannot make " her attend to reason.'

" I took the opportunity to beg that I might have " the honour of speaking to the young lady by her- " self. ' Oh! Sir,' cried Mrs. Johnson warmly, " ' how much should I be obliged to you if you could " prevail upon her to take care of herself.' I said " that I would do my best; and dinner being done, she

" showed me the way to Matilda's apartment, where " I found her in a dishabille, reclining on a couch. " Mrs. Johnson introduced me as one of her friends, " entreated her niece to attend to my advice, and " making the servant put down the soup on a little " table near the couch, left us to ourselves.

" Matilda received me with a grave countenance. " I began conversing on the common topics of mo- " rality; but she attended very coldly. I then ven- " tured to mention the subject of her affliction, and as I " uttered the name of Edward, I thought I perceived " some emotion. I went on, and seemed to be greatly " interested for her.—' As for poor Edward,' said I, " —' did you know him, Sir?' said Matilda in a tone " that encouraged me.—' Oh yes,' replied I, ' I know " him better than he knows himself.'—' Do you " know where he is, Sir? Is he safe? He must be in " want of every thing, for all he had is left here.'— " ' No, amiable Matilda,' said I, ' he wants nothing, " and you are the object of his greatest anxiety. He " cannot forgive himself for being the cause, though " the innocent cause, of your unhappiness.'—' Inno- " cent indeed,' replied she; ' alas! I was merely ex- " pressing my inclination to serve him, when the " poor youth in an emotion of gratitude kissed my " hand. If you see him, Sir, you may tell him that " I forgive him with all my heart, and that I wish I " were in a situation to be of any service to him. I " have some guineas in this purse, which I beg you " to give him from me.'—' No,' said I, ' it would be " useless to carry him such a gift; but I shall de- " light him by reporting to him your generosity " and kind compassion. He is, thank Heaven, above " want.'—' You charm me, Sir,' cried Matilda; ' but " why then is he reduced to service? he does not " seem born to such a situation.'—' No,' replied I, " ' he certainly was not born to such a situation;

" and I should speak more of him, but that I presume
" the interest you take in him is merely the result of
" compassion.'—' Surely, Sir,' said she, ' a young
" man like Edward, reduced to be a servant, deserves
" it much.'—' I believe I understand you,' said I,
" ' and far from thinking him to be pitied, he appears
" to me the happiest of men, since you have been
" able to distinguish him in the low state to which
" chance for a moment reduced him. Do not blush,
" lovely Matilda, for he is a gentleman; nor is he
" without fortune, but that is indeed small compared
" to yours. Though he loved you, though he was
" attached to you by all the feelings of which you
" are worthy, and of which a noble soul is suscepti-
" ble, in the uncertainty of his fate he thought
" it incumbent upon him to be silent, and to leave
" you. I come to you, commissioned by him, to pre-
" sent his respects, and make his excuses, and to in-
" form you that he is going to practise, under the
" name of Forrester, an innocent stratagem to si-
" lence the folly to which the manner of his leaving
" Crayhill has given rise: my commission extends no
" farther. I found means to introduce myself to
" your aunt as——' I was going to say in what man-
" ner, but Mrs. Johnson came in to see if her niece
" had taken her broth, which as soon as I heard the
" footstep I offered to Matilda, who, though it must
" have been cold and mawkish, swallowed it all down
" at a draught. Mrs. Johnson was charmed to find
" her niece so reasonable, and even thought her
" looks changed much for the better; which was all
" ascribed to my exhortations, and I was not per-
" mitted to leave the house till I had promised to re-
" turn: but I did not perform my promise. I mounted
" my horse and rode over to Stoney-ridge, to change
" my clothes and concert with Lloyd the plan of car-
" rying you away from Dame Shipley's. The morn-

" ing we came for you, while Lloyd assisted you to " mount your horse, I took Mrs. Shipley aside, and " giving her a letter for a French girl named Justine, " I charged her to deliver it with the livery in which " you had come away. Lloyd had learned at the " public-house some of your adventures with her. " Your cruelties were there celebrated, and the poor " creature, left sick at Crayhill, was said to be dy- " ing with grief for your flight, and on finding her- " self the jest of the village. I have the letter in my " pocket—here it is.

" *To Mademoiselle Justine.*

" ' Mr. Forrester thanks Mademoiselle Justine " for her goodness to his daughter, while she was at " Sir Robert Wallingford's. It was very fortunate " to meet a person of so obliging a disposition while " her folly lasted, and she desires Justine's accept- " ance of her thanks. Mr. Forrester sends back the " livery, which he understands has been the cause of " much noise and scandal, but which will of course " fall to the ground when the little foundation for it is " known. He hears that Sir Robert and his Lady " are from home, or he would have written to them. " As Miss Forrester has returned to her duty, the " things she left at Crayhill are of no use to her, " Mademoiselle Justine is therefore requested to let " them be given to the bearer of this note. In the " trunk there are some twenty or thirty guineas, " perhaps more, in a roll of paper: these, whatever " they amount to, Miss Forrester requests Justine " will accept.'

" This letter Dame Shipley sent by her children. " I gave them a guinea apiece, and all three went " off together to execute this little commission. At " Crayhill, on delivering the letter and livery, they " were strictly interrogated. They had learned

"their lesson from the circumstance itself happening "before their own eyes. Their report was consist- "ent and uniform. Mrs. Johnson too recollected "to have heard the clergyman speak of it the day "before. Justine found the guineas, and a means "of escaping the jeers of her tormentors. The story "was supported, embellished, and extended. In "four-and-twenty hours you passed for a girl ten "miles round, and soon afterwards Sir Robert and "Lady Wallingford were convinced of it; but Ma- "tilda, premonished by me, could not be deceived.

"Meanwhile, we had set out on our journey to "Wales, where I resolved to conceal you for some "time. While you were puzzled what to make of "me, and was taking me for a conjuror, or a fami- "liar, every body took you for my daughter, and I "conceived the plan of continuing your fancied illu- "sion, and of keeping you in your disguise. I wish- "ed to direct you without making myself known to "you, and concealment was of the greatest import- "ance to us both. You could not be well received "in the world, if Lord Ashmore refused to own and "protect you. I was sure that Lady Hewley, "the Bishop of Frome, and my Lord's daughters "and their husbands would frustrate my views, were "they to have an idea of them before I had taken "measures to ensure success. I carried you to Mrs. "Ap-Owen's with a determination so to complete "your disguise, that we might appear together in "London, and even before the witnesses of my mar- "riage, without giving rise to the slightest suspicion. "Being determined to impose on your imagination "respecting me, I seized every occasion that pre- "sented itself to surprise you. Going before you "into the inn at Honiton, I saw a young man in great "distress, and, asking the cause, was informed that "a villain had robbed him of his horse. By

" means of my confederacy with Lloyd, who act-
" ed as my servant, a purse of gold was slipped into
" his pocket, which I made him find when I thought
" proper. At Bridgewater, having gone out early
" to make a purchase of some female apparel, that I
" intended to make use of the next day, I happened
" to witness the dispute that took place between the
" French prisoners and the countrymen, respecting
" Miss Orchard. The young woman being frightened
" and ready to faint, I offered her my arm and saw
" her home. When I returned to the inn I found
" means to reconcile the parties by making use of
" the influence which truth and reason have over
" persons inclined to listen. It was entirely by ac-
" cident that I met the sergeant of my company, and
" it was owing to a precaution I had taken in the
" morning that you found the purse in your pocket.
" Till then all that had passed from the time we
" left Dame Shipley's was calculated to persuade you
" that I was a man, but next morning when you
" awoke you saw I was a woman; nor in this was
" my design merely to surprise you. We were go-
" ing to Mrs. Ap-Owen's, where I wished to be free,
" to save myself from many questions I did not want
" to answer, and in short to have it at my option to
" stay as long or as short a time as I pleased. As
" Captain Godfrey I must have been constrained;
" by passing for his sister I became mistress of my
" time and actions. I therefore took my female at-
" tire and gave the landlady a good price for her
" saddle, on which I mounted in the morning.
" At the petty inn where we stopped to dine
" that day, we had like to have had a serious
" adventure: fortunately on entering, when you were
" insulted by the ruffians, who took you for a woman,
" I was struck with the face of one of them, and soon
" recollected him to be one of the villains whom I

" had seen plotting at the coffee-house against my " brother. Having attacked and disarmed him, I " said to him in Irish, which I had heard him speak, " *I do not wish to have you hanged—fly immediately* " *—a description of you has been sent to a Justice in* " *this neighbourhood, and there are officers in pursuit* " *of you, employed by Lord Ashmore.* The rogues, " alarmed at the intelligence, disappeared. I was " very glad of it, for we might otherwise have fallen " in with them in a character different from that of " gallants, and I should not have found it so easy " to get rid of them.

" At Mrs. Ap-Owen's I found a letter from Lloyd, " whom I had requested to return to the neighbour- " hood of Crayhill to send me intelligence. He in- " formed me of the effect of my letter on Mademoiselle " Justine, and sent me other news of a more inte- " resting nature, but also more alarming.

" Previous to the advances made by Lord Chatter- " ton for Matilda's hand, a young Baronet of Sussex " encouraged by her aunt had manifested his hopes. " The aunt, pleased to get rid of his Lordship, had " written to the Baronet's family to send for him " from France where he then was, and it was believ- " ed that the marriage would be concluded upon " at Mrs. Johnson's at Sutton, and preparations " were making for an immediate removal from Cray- " hill to Sussex. I wrote to Lloyd, begging him to " go immediately to Sutton, and secure me a small " house there. My plan was formed, and I was de- " termined to dispute the ground foot to foot with Sir " Charles Cawtherly. As yet I was not entirely at my " own command, for I was again called upon by the " Admiralty to attend respecting some accounts, and " other occurrences that had taken place during the " expedition. I left you learning Welch of Mrs. Ap- " Owen, and went to London, where I was detained,

" wearied, and out of patience, a whole month, " dancing attendance not only on the Lords Com- " missioners of the Admiralty, but on officers, in the " knowledge of whose affairs I was involved. At " length I was regularly and fully discharged.

" I should have returned directly to you, but for " the desire I felt to have it in my power to bring " you the news of my reconciliation with Lord Ash- " more, and to appear at last in my real character. " The time appointed for my going down to Belmont- " Castle was already elapsed, I determined to go, " and I arrived at the gate before I was able to settle " in my mind the means I should take in the difficult " attempt of making myself known to him. I asked " for the Earl, and was told that he could not be seen. " I begged a footman to tell his Lordship that a " stranger, a Frenchman whom he had desired to " call, wished to have the honour of seeing him. " He burst out into a horselaugh, and said my Lord " wanted neither dancer, frizeur, nor scullion, and " that I might go about my business.

" I went to an inn, where I wrote a note, in which " I mentioned my arrival, inclosing in it the ring his " Lordship gave me, and I engaged the landlord to " carry it himself. The talisman instantly operated: " in less than half an hour a valet-de-chambre came to " request that I would go to the castle, and I was in- " troduced into my brother's room.

" He was alone. ' You have been long coming,' said " he, ' and I began to fear that you did not mean to " keep your word with me.' Then perceiving that " I trembled; ' sit down,' continued he, ' for you seem " fatigued. Speak; I am your debtor, an obligation " oppresses me; do you come to let me know how " I may repay it?'

" ' Yes, my Lord,' replied I, throwing myself at his " feet, ' I come to seek in you the peace, honour, hap-

" piness of all that is dear to me. All is in your hands.'

" ' Rise,' said he, ' rise: I thought you a man, but " you are shedding tears—'—' I am not a man, my " Lord'—' Not a man! why, are you the devil?' I " was almost suffocated with tears.—' And do these " sad features, my Lord,' replied I, ' excite no re- " membrance? does nothing speak at your heart " while mine is ready to break?'—' Why do you talk " of your features and of your heart? are you a wo- " man? What can there be in common between you " and me?'—' One blood, my Lord,' cried I: ' the " wretched Mar—' I could not finish my name— " ' Marcia!' cried he, ' my sister Marcia!'—He " could say no more, he fell back in his chair; I " threw my arms round him, I bathed him with my " tears, while he, looking at me in amazement, seem- " ed deprived of all motion.

" After a short pause he started up suddenly, and " pushed me into a chair:—' Keep off, I am resolved " you shall not make me weep—Marcia! my sister " Marcia! but what has become of you? Whence " come you, mad creature that you are?'

" My brother was softened; I saw it. ' Hear me, my " Lord,' said I, again embracing his knees; ' promise " me your pardon, and to obtain for me that of my " sister, of Lady Morris, Lady Evelyn, the Bishop, " in short, of our whole family.'

" ' Rise, once more I tell you, rise,' said he, in " a kind of pet; ' do not think of humbling yourself " to the people you talk of. If you have been guilty " of some follies, we have been guilty of others, my- " self the foremost. The Bishop is a dotard and a " zealot; Lady Hewley is devoured with the spleen; " my sons-in-law are fools, and my daughters mad- " women fit for Bedlam. Make yourself easy, my " dear Marcia, about this set of originals. I have " not been long acquainted with you, but be assured,

" I already value you far more than all of them put " together. You are the Captain Godfrey, so highly " spoken of; you have served the state, you have " saved my pocket-book, and probably my life; if " you cannot be called a bashful girl, none can deny " that you are a fine brave fellow.'

" Comforted by so favourable an opening, I gave " him a short account of my adventures, to which he " listened attentively, and with great interest. When " I mentioned your birth : ' you have a son, then,' " cried he,' is he alive? is he good for any thing?' I " augured much in your favour from these two ques- " tions, and continued my story with the greatest con- " fidence. As soon as I had finished: ' I have listened " to you, Marcia,' said he,' with great pleasure; you " have interested me extremely. Hah! my noble sons- " in-law! all then is not lost to me ; there yet remain " for me objects of natural and rational attachment. " I must open my heart to you, Marcia. Ever since " the death of my son, I have had nothing but cause " to be dissatisfied with my daughters and their hus- " bands. Those people consider my fortune as " theirs, and me as their steward: they are deficient " even in the slightest respect. They take no no- " tice of Lady Hewley since she has lost her chil- " dren, and they treat the Bishop still more cavalier- " ly. He attempted a remonstrance, but they only " called him a pedant: he is enraged. We will do " something for your son, my dear Marcia; go to " him, go and attend to your affairs, and do not show " yourself here, till I have arranged my plan.' Say- " ing this, he embraced me, then seemed to expect " my going, yet held me back.

" ' Tell me,' exclaimed he, ' do you answer that " your son's veins have been purified of every " drop of Irish blood?' My answer satisfied him. " ' Trust me,' said he, ' he shall not even retain the

" name; but say nothing to him at present: he does
" not know who he is, let him remain ignorant awhile.
" He is young, and may have a propensity to talk;
" now it is necessary we should be cautious and se-
" cret. We have to do with men who have power,
" and whose intrigues may thwart us.' He then de-
" sired to hear from me, and said that he would let
" me know when it was time for me to appear.

" From Dorsetshire I hastened to you at Mrs. Ap-
" Owen's: we set out together for Sussex, and ar-
" rived at Sutton, where an acquaintance with Mrs.
" Johnson being necessary to my plans, I managed a
" connexion with Mr. Allen, and we were soon after
" introduced into the house where your mistress liv-
" ed. Sir Charles Cawtherly was paying his addresses
" to Matilda, but with little progress in her heart;
" yet as the families on both sides were urging her, and
" as the Baronet was amiable, she might be persuaded
" to decide in his favour. By leaving you at Mrs.
" Johnson's in your rustic apparel, I put it in your
" power to live familiarly with her, and to find op-
" portunities of declaring yourself if it became neces-
" sary; for I should have then informed you who you
" were, the handsome fortune you might expect, and
" I do not doubt you would have prevailed upon her
" to refuse the brilliant offers of the Baronet. But
" he did not give you the trouble of disputing his
" mistress's heart: he lost himself by a spirit of levi-
" ty and licentiousness. I saw that he cast his eyes
" on you the very first day we were at Mrs. John-
" son's. I made some enquiry into his principles,
" and suspected his designs. I kept constantly in
" your company, to excite by constraint his tran-
" sient prepossession. He took advantage of the
" first moment I left you alone, to declare it to you,
" and then he wrote to you. I pretended to tear
" his letter before you, but in that I deceived you.

" Obliged to return to Belmont-castle, I spoke to " Mr. Allen on my embarrassment respecting your " being left alone with a servant.—' I will take her " home to my house,' said the worthy man.—' She " is very young,' replied I.—' Well, well,' returned " he, ' I'll propose to Mrs. Johnson to receive her.' " —' This,' I observed, ' would be to expose her still " more; it would be to deliver her up to the enemy.' " I then gave the vicar Sir Charles's letter. The " worthy Allen, rather scurvily treated in the letter, " was shocked at this mark of wickedness and depra- " vity, and immediately carried it to Mrs. Johnson, " who soon dismissed the Baronet, without telling " Matilda her reason, as you were to be with her, " lest it should occasion any coolness towards you. " From the time I returned to Sutton, and our leav- " ing it together to come here, nothing happened " that requires explanation: but when we were within " a few miles of Belmont-castle, having it in my power " to direct our conversation, I turned it upon the " choice of professions. I argued with you, I ex- " hausted your patience, and I in a manner forced " you to ask me to make you a peer, as if to defy me. " Far from disconcerting me, when you had made " your choice I bade you take your title from any " of the seats in view that you liked best. Belmont- " castle and these grounds lay full before us; I of- " fered it to you, and you, naturally enough, without " reflecting, gave it the preference to four or five " other handsome seats round the country. The " knowledge of my adventure with your uncle enables " you to understand what has happened to you here. " Forgive me, my dear boy, for taking advantage of " your credulity. To a certain degree I found it ne- " cessary. Besides, though credulity be a defect in " persons whose opinions are established and con- " firmed by settled studies, age and experience, it is

" not so in a youth of nineteen, who had hardly open-
" ed his books at the university before he left it, and
" who may doubt and believe alternately without
" much blame, provided he does not do it too lightly
" and without grounds: as he cannot have investi-
" gated things thoroughly, suspense itself is a proof
" of judgment and natural sagacity.

" It now remains for me to explain our hopes to
" you. Lady Hewley and the Bishop are thoroughly
" reconciled with me, and are ready to receive you;
" you will be the Bishop's heir, and Lady Hewley
" means to settle upon you immediately a very fine
" estate of hers in Somersetshire. It is worth three
" thousand a-year. But this gift is not entirely gra-
" tuitous: she wants twenty thousand pounds to set-
" tle her affairs, which I have lent her without in-
" terest, and which will come to you after her death.
" Lord Ashmore means, by an application to the
" King, to have the family title limited to you, and
" to settle his property, by means of a private act of
" parliament, in consequence of which this estate
" which bears our name will be yours after his death.
" It is worth eight thousand a-year. On your mar-
" riage my Lord will make you a suitable present;
" and as for me, being resolved to live in future with
" you, I shall reserve for myself no more than I may
" occasionally want. Thus, my son, you are a match
" not to be disdained by Miss Wallingford's family.
" While Lords Morris and Evelyn are interesting
" themselves at court for your immediate elevation to
" the peerage, under the title of Belmont, with a right
" of succession to the Earldom of Ashmore, and en-
" gaging Lord Hallidan's influence over Sir Robert
" Wallingford for the purpose of removing every
" obstacle to your marriage with his daughter, Lady
" Hewley, who knows Lady Wallingford, has under-
" taken to obtain her consent. I am going to Sutton

" to court Mrs. Johnson, and Matilda. I shall leave
" you with your uncle, whom you now know from
" what I have said. Merit his esteem and friend-
" ship, and do every thing in your power to please
" him: this you ought to do for your own interest,
" but still more through gratitude."

Conclusion.

MORLAND listened with the most eager attention to his mother, and night surprised them before they perceived that the sun was set. Overcome with the kindness he received, and unable to speak for his feelings, he could, at first, only press Lady Marcia's hand. By degrees, as his fortune unfolded to him, his mind seemed to expand, and his soul to mount: he was not dazzled by the wealth that poured in upon him, he considered it with modesty and a noble disinterestedness; he was already worthy of his prosperity by the moderation of his sentiments, and the use he proposed to make of it. On his return to the house, he found his uncle alone, and shared with his mother the affectionate caresses of that nobleman, who felt a real affection for him, and already considered him as his son.

Lady Marcia, still as Captain Godfrey, set off next day for Sussex. Morland, left alone with Lord Ashmore, soon experienced some effects of his singularity, and even some little roughness; but they were transient, and even had he not been inspired with a warm affection and respect for his uncle, his character had been so trained, and as it were new moulded by the different trials to which it had been put by the feigned Captain, that the little thwartings she met with never vexed him for a moment. He

managed constantly to pay a deference to Lord Ashmore, without a weak desertion of his own judgment; he was respectful with dignity, and polite without flattery. His Lordship was astonished at it. He conceived that men were inflexible or pliant; and that there was no medium between the two characters: the former was his own, the latter he thought base and unworthy of an Englishman: but his nephew appeared to him at once dignified and condescending. He did not choose to spoil the young man, but in his own mind he thought all men should be like him: we know no medium, thought he, we are always in extremes. By degrees his nephew cured him of his misanthropy, a fault that had obscured his good qualities, and deprived him of every pleasure in the enjoyment of his fortune.

In about ten days Morland received the following letter from Lady Marcia:

"My dear Edward,

"Mrs. Johnson, relying on me, and well acquainted with the title of Ashmore, soon espoused your cause, but thought it would not be easy to obtain the consent of her niece, with whom I was permitted to have a private conversation. I do not know whether Matilda would have heard me to an end as I talked of a peer of England, if Edward had not been the name of the peer. There is a something in the sound of that name that has the power of drawing attention. I proceeded with the object of my embassy; but to contrive that your mistress's surprise should be gentle, I introduced some remarks on her indisposition at Crayhill, and spoke of the clergyman whom she had seen there. Matilda looked at me and recollected me: 'What, was it you, Captain Godfrey,' cried she, 'that my aunt brought to my room in black clothes?'—'Yes, lovely Ma-

" tilda,' said I, ' I came then to speak for Edward,
" and for the same Edward am I now come to solicit
" your hand.' I will not keep you in suspense,
" the suit was not rejected. Matilda now enquired
" for Emma. ' Emma!' said I, with a mysterious
" air; ' will you be secret? Emma—was the sister of
" your friend Miss Forrester—nay Emma was Miss
" Forrester herself, and I was once her father, Mr.
" Forrester'——Matilda screamed with the surprise
" of recollection, and began to scold me, but I ran
" off laughing to Mrs. Johnson's apartment. I told
" her of the success of my embassy, and gave her
" letters from both of your uncles, which I assisted
" her in answering; every thing has turned out as I
" wished. Allen, having heard of my arrival, came to
" see me. As soon as we had shaken hands he asked
" for Emma, the dear Emma— ' As for Emma, my
" dear friend,' said I, ' I am sorry to tell you she is no
" longer at my disposal. Lord Ashmore, our relation,
" protector, and friend, has taken her, and is going to
" dispose of her in marriage very advantageously.'—
" ' Lord Ashmore!' exclaimed he. ' The same,'
" replied I, ' he knows your friendship for us, and
" feels grateful to you for it; he has even interested
" himself to obtain your preferment, and here is your
" mistress's picture.' The good man stood listening
" to me with his mouth open, then casting his eyes
" over the paper I gave him, found it to be a presen-
" tation to the deanery of Wells, by the Bishop of
" Frome. I told him the income of it. Oh! what
" a seducing object is a deanery of eight hundred a-
" year! I felt at once pleasure and pity at the joy
" testified by our friend. I charmed him by calling
" him Dean. It has been agreed that his present
" living, which is in Mrs. Johnson's gift, shall be be-
" stowed on the curate of Reading, who must have
" heard of his preferment by this time. After think-

" ing of you and your friends, it is right I should
" think of mine. I am going to Wales to see Lloyd
" married to Winny Ap-Owen, and hope to bring
" them with me to your wedding. Adieu! my dear
" Edward; merit your uncle's friendship, and God's
" blessing. I am tenderly, and now *invariably*,
" Your affectionate mother,

" MARCIA BELMONT."

Morland carried this letter to his uncle, who had received others from his sons-in-law, and also from Lady Hewley and the Bishop. A patent was preparing for Morland's peerage, the proposed settlement of Lord Ashmore's property was advancing in the hands of the lawyers with as much dispatch as possible, and the bill was expected to be introduced in the House in the course of ten days. Lady Hewley had paid a visit to Lady Wallingford, who felt herself much honoured by the proposed match; and Sir Robert, on being spoken to by Lord Hallidan, was so charmed, that instead of seven thousand pounds, he nobly offered an estate worth nine. To this Mrs. Johnson added two thousand a-year, with an assurance of her whole property after her death. Lord Ashmore enjoyed this prospect of fortune even more than Morland, who thought only of Matilda. And now both families were eager to hasten the marriage, the ceremony of which was appointed to be performed by the Bishop of Frome, at the estate Morland had received from his aunt, Lady Hewley; where, on the day fixed, the parties all met, and Lady Marcia, properly equipped, introduced Lloyd and his bride. Before this brilliant company the lovers were united in the chapel belonging to the mansion, and Sir Robert Wallingford swore they were the handsomest couple in England, which nobody could deny.

Justine and Kitty were present at the ceremony. Justine could not help observing, that the bridegroom was as like Miss Forrester as two peas. "He is much "more like the Welch girl I told you of," said Kitty.

Morland and Matilda were the happiest of human creatures. They were the delight of Lord Ashmore, and indeed of all who knew them. Lady Marcia was long their friend and counsellor; she relinquished her regimentals, and felt no more a desire for travelling. Lloyd quitted Wales, and settled in Somersetshire. He forgave Captain Godfrey for concealing from him the adventures of Lady Marcia Belmont, and their friendship increased with their years.

THE END.

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